

March, 1939

The American Mercury



I Am a Reactionary	Channing Pollock
Dictators Into Gods: <i>The Deification of Hitler and Stalin</i>	Eugene Lyons
King James I of Michigan	Oland D. Russell
Hands Off Japan!	William Henry Chamberlin
The Criminality of the State	Albert Jay Nock
The Paint and Powder Racket: <i>The Truth About Cosmetics</i>	Lois Mattox Miller
Vulgar Vittles	Della T. Lutes
The High Cost of Lawing	Victor C. Cormier
San Francisco Disturbance	James Stevens
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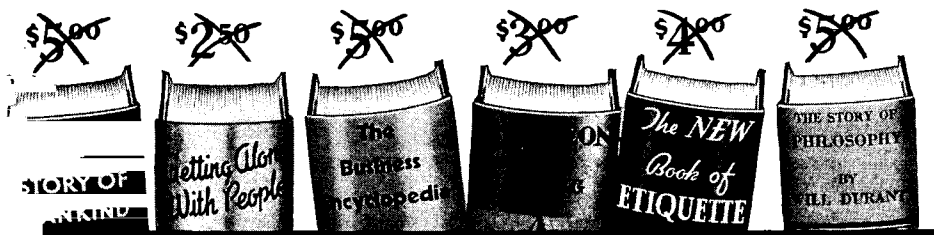
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BRINGING ROOSEVELT UP TO DATE

By H. L. MENCKEN

HAVING worked his wizardry upon all the itches that used to bother people at home, the Hon. Mr. Roosevelt now proceeds to purge the rest of the world of its noxious protozoa: Hitler, Mussolini, Franco, the Japs, *et al* — but always overlooking, I note, Stalin. The program is a vast one; nevertheless, I am somewhat hopeful of its success — at all events, to the extent that the first course of treatment has been a success. It may not, to be sure, actually cure the patient — indeed it will probably only make him worse — but it will at least roll up a great many votes, each and every one of which will be very useful on the Tuesday following the first Monday of November 1940.

This gag of fetching the boobs by

discovering and scotching bugaboos beyond the seas is an old one, and has been resorted to by more than one hero of the Republic. It is, in fact, older than the Republic itself, for on Friday, April 7, 1775, Dr. Samuel Johnson entertained the boozers in a London tavern with a very tart characterization of its practitioners, now accessible in all books of quotations. In the present case, one gathers, the beneficiaries of the exorcism are not to be confined to citizens of the United States, but will also include those of the idealistic “democracies” to the southward. More, it will likewise take in the lieges of the aforesaid Comrade Stalin. Once again the whole earth is to be made safe for democracy.

How far the comedy will go re-

mains to be seen. It may stop with tall talk, or it may follow through to actual bloodshed. A good deal depends, it is apparent, upon the ebb and flow of bellicosity in England. If the English get over their fear of gas long enough to make a stand, then Uncle Shylock will tag along as heretofore, with what remains of his checkbook in his hand. But if the English decide that the war talked of is likely to be anything short of a walkover, there will be a corresponding abatement of altruistic ferocity on the Washington front. At the moment, the preponderance of inspired opinion down there favors pushing the salvation of humanity as far as it will stretch. The boys all like the fat and easy life of kept idealists, and are well aware that their places at the trough are not as secure as they were before last November. The easiest way to make them safe will be to break down the loutish prejudice against a third term, and the easiest way to accomplish that will be to set the bugles to blowing.

If war it is to be, I see no impediment to its popular success, despite a certain theoretical objection to carnage among the plain people. That objection, after all, is hardly more than superficial, and might be upset by two weeks, or even one week, of intensive radio crooning.

The plain people, in truth, are always in favor of war, once the high moral issues involved have been properly presented to them. They like the excitement, they like the noise, and they like, above all, the escape from milking cows and emptying crank-cases. The recurrent proposal to prevent wars by submitting every declaration thereof to a plebiscite is almost as crazy as the New Deal scheme to abolish debt by multiplying it. No one could imagine any such plebiscite, after a brisk campaign of alarm and hullabaloo, going nay. In the present case the ground has been well prepared by the pacifists, who have all joined the People's Front operated from Moscow, and are howling for blood. I may forget a few Quakers here, but if so it is not important, for nearly all those Quakers will shut off their quaking when the drums begin to roll, just as their brethren Hoover and A. Mitchell Palmer did in 1917. The example of Palmer, in fact, shows that even the most pious Quaker may carry a Bowie knife in his other cheek.

But all this depends on the English, whose technique for dealing with Uncle Shylock is perfect. They have whole herds of Anthony Edens in their paddocks, and know how to use them. The idea that the

American fount of honor, socially speaking, lies in the Stork Club or El Morocco is a delusion of the Hearst columnists; its actual situs is still Buckingham Palace. Two-thirds of the foreign news in American newspapers is filtered through London, and comes out dyed by the sap of the old red ensign. One of the great provincial journals of the Republic has a rule that no member of its staff shall serve as its London correspondent for more than two years: the fear is that any Yankee staying there longer is bound to become an Englishman, *de facto* if not *de jure*. The other papers let nature take its course. That course is swift, but no swifter than in the case of ambassadors. These imposing men all have their eyes on the equestrian statue to Walter Hines Page in Westminster Abbey, between Washington's and George III's. The Hon. Joseph Patrick Kennedy seems to have grasped the English point of view almost instantly.

II

But all this really belongs to the future, whether near or far. The immediate and unappetizing present remains, with a streamer of past stretching back to 1933. What is the score of the New Deal to

date? I note a few somewhat dim ones and twos, but the rest of it is only a line of zeros. Not a single one of the great murrains that the Hon. Mr. Roosevelt and his associated Munyons were to cure so facilely has been disposed of. The farmers who were bellowing for succor in 1933 are still bellowing for succor today. In the cities, there are more people out of work now than then. Organized labor, which was united when Utopia came in, is now divided and at war. The actual working man, once at the mercy of his bosses and their goons, is now at the mercy of professional labor leaders and their goons. The banks, for generations pegged to Wall Street, are now pegged to the Treasury, and will go overboard with it when the day of auditing comes. Wall Street itself, purged and perfumed by a stupendous combination of executive, legislative, and judicial mendicants, has responded gloriously by producing Musica. The dollar that the Hon. Mr. Roosevelt swore to guard so heroically is now nearly half baloney, and may be much more than half come Michaelmas. The budget that was to have been balanced is rocking on to Einsteinian realms. The job-holders who were to have been decimated have multiplied past all counting.

But there is no need to go on with the list: it might be doubled or tripled in length, and still fall far short of the whole story. The essential fact is that the New Deal has been a gigantic flop. The American people have been mulcted billions to pay for it, and they have not got it. The money might as well have been laid out for toy balloons or lollypops. Save for the huge hordes of job-holders who now snuggle at the public teat, no one has got any ponderable good out of it, not even the multitude of dolebirds. To say that any other American is more secure than he was is to talk nonsense. The provident of all classes have seen their security diminish steadily, and even the chronic mendicants are never sure that the dole of today will be continued tomorrow. All that one may conclude with any assurance is that every decent American is poorer than he was six years ago, that his hold on his job has grown more precarious, and that the avalanche of taxes that will presently come down on him is growing heavier every day.

It would be impossible to imagine any Planned Economy turning out worse. If it had been concocted by a gang of schoolboys, or even by a gang of school teachers, it could not have been a more dismal failure. That the system it displaced was

irrational and increasingly unworkable I am surely not one to deny, for I spent most of my time during the years from 1918 to 1932 denouncing it in high, astounding terms, and reviling the jackasses responsible for it. It seemed to me then, and it still seems to me now, that the same sound information and homely common sense that are commonly applied to the operations of a house of correction, a night club, or a zoo might be applied just as well to the operation of a State. I see no essential difficulty in policing trade and industry in a reasonable manner, or in differentiating between property honestly acquired and property stolen, or in striking a fair balance between capital and labor, or in setting up effective machinery for protecting the helpless against private swindlers. It has been done in some part, at least, in the fascist countries, and even in communist Russia. I am against both the fascist scheme and the communist scheme, but it would be silly to deny that, within their unpleasant patterns, they make some show of working.

But no such scheme, whether pleasant or unpleasant, is automatic: it must be made to work by concrete men, each skilled to do his share. At the top there must be demagogues who are adept at sing-

ing the songs the sirens sang, and below there must be a sufficient corps of competent administrators. The basic trouble with the New Deal is that it has tried to get on with the demagogues alone, and neglected the administrators. In the whole outfit at Washington there is scarcely a man who, in secular life, would stand out more conspicuously than a police sergeant loafing on the corner. They are all, with a few lonely exceptions, complete nonentities — professional uplifters, third-rate lawyers, chronic job-holders, decayed chautauquans, and the like. The one criterion that seems to have been applied to them is the criterion of *in*competence. If the regulation of business is the matter in hand, then the man chosen for it is a donkey who has never met a payroll or earned a cent. If finance is the job, then the works foreman is a vacuum who knows no more about the snaring and husbanding of money than a cow. If law is the dish, then the test is that the nominee must be violently against the Constitution, and convinced in conscience that the chief duty of a judge is to throw it out of the window, and apply his eye to the election returns.

The thing goes to fantastic lengths. No Administration in recent history, not even Harding's,

has brought together a more forbidding gang of quacks and shysters. There are job-holders in that gang, and some of them in very high posts (including the judicial), who suggest the creatures of Gilbert and Sullivan. They not only know nothing about the matters they are told off to deal with; they appear to be incapable of learning anything. After six years in office they are twice as imbecile as they were when they began. Indeed, I can think of none who shows any accretion of capacity, even on the modest scale that a YMCA secretary put in command of a battleship might be expected to show it. Those that were palpable damned fools in 1933 are now fools doubly, triply, and quadruply damned. The atmosphere is wholly against sense.

III

This obscenity, we are asked to believe, is a sublime manifestation of democracy in action — a magnificent proof that government for the people, of the people, and by the people has not perished from the earth. The judicious will note at once that in the very next breath we are asked to believe that Venezuela is another arena of democracy, and Peru a third, and China a

fourth, and Government Spain a fifth, and Soviet Russia a sixth. In brief, he will note that the theory behind the buffoonery is almost as antic as the buffoonery itself. There is, in fact, no more genuine democracy in the New Deal order of things than there is in the lunacies of Stalin and Hitler. All are alike shot through with false pretenses. Each and every one is a scheme of personal government founded on the postulate that the mob is infinitely stupid, and may be induced to believe anything, provided only it be incredible. That postulate is the only sound and honest element in any of them.

The present is no time for discussing the nature of actual democracy, but every schoolboy must know this much about it at least: that two of its necessary ingredients are the idea that government is an agency of clearly defined and strictly limited powers, and the idea that the highest of all its functions is to maintain equality before the law. Both ideas had their origin, not in the speculations of the Eighteenth Century columnists, but in the canon law that antedated them by nearly a thousand years. The equality of souls before God was an essential principle of that canon law, and so was the doctrine that the powers and preroga-

tives of an earthly ruler had rigid limits, and might not be overstepped without incurring drastic penalties, if not on this earth then at least in the transcendental blast-furnaces beyond. The Eighteenth Century brethren hitched these ideas together, and proceeded to elaborate and pollute them. The doctrine that even the lowliest man should enjoy a reasonable politeness from the law became converted into the doctrine that the lowliest man *was* the law, and the doctrine that the powers of government should be limited began to carry a corollary that all the powers remaining belonged to the mob.

These embellishments naturally aroused the suspicions of the Founding Fathers, who were nearly all, as Dr. Charles A. Beard has demonstrated, solvent men of some education, and they made adroit efforts to get rid of the worst of them. But they never questioned the soundness of the original ideas, and neither has any other reflective man to this day. If democracy has any rationality in it whatever, then they are its essential principles. Take either of them away, and it becomes only a kind of despotism, no matter how firmly it may cling to its name. But what reflective men have favored as safe and sound, demagogues have al-

ways sought to destroy. They began to pop up in the first days of the Republic, and they have been harassing it ever since. Always they have sought to augment their own power by widening the powers of government, and always they have tried to get support from the mob by promising it a chance to loot and wreck its betters. No demagogue in American history has pursued that double and devious game more assiduously than the Hon. Mr. Roosevelt, and no other has come so close to success. By every trick and dodge known to the sorry art he practices he has reached out for more and more power, and every time he has offered to pay for it by making Have-Not A free of Have B's hen-roost. He started out upon his career with a great assortment of highly dubious governmental theories, and to it he has added others and worse from time to time, but as he approaches the end of his career the only survivor is the one that I have just described. All the rest have gone down the chute. Promise after promise, made with every solemnity, has been repudiated and forgotten. But the promise to give A another crack at B's goods still remains. B is any man who follows a useful calling, takes care of his earnings, lives within his means,

and asks only to be let alone. A is any man who pants for more than he can collar, and hates the man who has collared what he lacks.

It must be apparent that the Hon. Mr. Roosevelt has got appreciably further along this road than any of his predecessors, either on the stump or at the mike. When he goes out at last, precious little will be left of the idea that government is a creature of limited powers, with no right of its own to extend them. The Federal bureaucracy has simply engulfed the country, and the fact that American business men must now supply it with 135,000,000 reports a year is but a small indicator of its huge and malignant proliferation. More and more of the national income is being funnelled through its ever-widening gullet, and more and more of the freedom of the individual is being subordinated to its mandates. The cost of government is higher every day, and government itself is less responsible. The New Deal has set up a vast horde of administrative despots who make stronger and stronger efforts to shake off judicial review and control, and those efforts meet with steadily increasing success. It takes only a non-Freudian dream by a Hopkins, an Ickes, or a Wallace to impose an entirely new function upon government, and to

give it all the weight and authority of those set forth in the Constitution. If it conflicts with any that is so set forth, then it prevails. The process of change, once so formal and so difficult, has now been reduced to two steps: first, grab whatever is wanted, and second, go on the air and sell the usurpation to the boobs.

The equality of citizens before the law has been under violent attack since the Roosevelt idealists moved on Washington, and effort after effort has been made to destroy it, some of them extremely disingenuous, but others quite open. There was nothing else in the long campaign to pack the courts. Its undisguised purpose was to make the judges docile clients of the Administration, ready at all times to twist and torture the law in favor of its friends and against its opponents. The scheme failed, but by other devices the courts were duly packed — if not with actual King's men, then at least with men grown jittery and eager to please. The climax came with the Hon. Hugo L. Black's dictum that citizens who organize themselves into corporations lose thereby all their civil rights. So far, the majority of judges have not agreed, but not a few have shown signs of wobbling, and if the war scare opens the way for a

third term, enough will have been convinced by 1944 to make the bench as safe for democracy as the Department of Justice or the National Labor Relations Board.

IV

Such are the achievements of the inspired men who now reign at Washington. Their ultimate issue I do not venture to predict. It may be, as the *Daily Worker* was saying on April 16 last, that they are only preliminary to larger and bolder experiments in the penal control of the citizen, culminating finally in the Revolution itself. ("Let us make sure," the *Worker* admonished its customers, "that the President's programme is enacted as it stands. *It is a fine beginning*. Let's pass it, *and then go on from there*.") Or it may be that the wash and counterwash of events will lead us toward the Utopias of Adolf and Benito. I doubt that even a New Deal wizard, for all his powers over past, present, and future, could tell you. But one thing is plain: that if anything plausibly describable as democracy is ever restored in These States, it will only be after long effort and dreadful sweating. The Hon. Mr. Roosevelt and his attendant messiahs have taken us a long, long leap the other way.

Thou who fructifiest the earth,
 Thou who restorest the centuries,
 Thou who makest bloom the spring,
 Thou who makest vibrate the musical
 chords.

* * *

Thou, splendor of my spring, O Thou,
 Sun reflected by millions of hearts.

Whatever the official explanations and political slogans advanced by the German and Soviet governments to justify their deadly hostility to older religions, the real reasons are sufficiently in evidence. By definition an authoritarian regime is supreme in every department of human life and must exact absolute subservience of the individual mind and soul. It cannot tolerate a spiritual authority above its own or submit any of its beliefs and acts to judgment under moral codes other than its own. Somehow it must destroy even that last inner refuge from its decrees, concentration camps, and blood purges offered to the believer by religion. Besides, the ethics of both Christianity and Judaism prescribe a meekness, charity, and other-worldliness of spirit that do not accord with the hard-boiled, ruthless ideologies of the dictatorships.

For Hitler it was not enough to smash the temporal influence of the Catholic Church as expressed in the Centrist Party, or to curb the anti-Nazi activities of many Lu-

theran pastors. He had to create a new spiritual authority, a new set of moral justifications for his behavior. "The National Socialist Party", he declared on July 16, 1933, "has now become the State. All power is in the hands of the Imperial Executive. . . . There no longer exists authority coming from any sphere of the Reich. There is now only one authority: the idea of the German people."

The crux of the warning is in the words "any sphere". The idea of the German people must supplant older authority even in the sphere of the heart and the conscience. It is the new German god. Wherefore the Bible is arbitrarily "Aryanized", the Christ is turned into a Nordic, the Paulist doctrine is abandoned as Syrian-Jewish, the Old Testament and the Hebraic Jehovah are repudiated, and the Sermon on the Mount is edited to compass Nazi notions of force and intolerance. Indeed, the revised Christianity can scarcely be recognized by Christians as stemming from a common religion. They can only be horrified by such words as those spoken by one of the founders of the new "German Christian Church", Dr. Krause, at a Berlin mass meeting on January 17, 1934:

National Socialism must not be judged from a Biblical or Ecclesiasti-

cal standpoint: it is the Bible and the Church which must be judged from the Nazi standpoint. The Nazi State embodies the totality of God.

But even that Aryanized Christianity irks the new overlords. Wherefore a Neo-Paganist faith emerges. The sensational upsurge of the Nazi movement had many points of resemblance with a religious revival. And now Hitler is given a cosmic mission and a supernatural destiny. German blood is endowed with a mystical potency and significance, and the sacrifice of impure enemy blood becomes a mystical sacrament. The *Nordung-blätter* of the German Faith Movement thunder:

Do you worship with all your soul —
the Great Spirit of the German Race?
Or are you one of those . . . who
bend their backs and crawl to the
cross of a foreign land?

Perhaps there is a tell-tale symbolism in the fact that the Nazi swastika is a distorted cross.

The leit-motif of the Nazi hymns, both in the Neo-Pagan ritual and in the patriotic songs, is blood: sacred Nordic blood, blood thinking, blood worship, blood purges. The new German youth is fond of singing: "*Wenn's Judenblut vom Messer spritzt, Dann geht's nochmal so gut,*" which is to say: "When Jewish blood spurts from the knife, Then things go

twice as well." A Neo-Pagan invocation restates the same sadistic thought:

So stand the storm battalions
Ready for the racial fight;
Only when Jews lie bleeding
Can we be truly free.

A speech quoted by the *New York Times* (October 31, 1933) from a Munich newspaper underlines the force of this new blood-awareness and blood-worship, something elemental, barbaric, defiant of millennia of civilizing efforts. It reads in part:

Here we will not speak the warm words of peace, the words Home and Fatherland. Our words are spoken in the face of the awful summons of war. Youths, young hands are raised in an oath before this monument which is erected to the sublimity of bloodshed — and Michael is the Angel of Death — and you are swearing that your lives belong to the Reich and your blood to the Leader.

From this to the actual deification of Hitler is only a step, and millions of his followers have already taken that step. Listen to Hans Kerrl's declaration:

As Christ in his twelve disciples raised a stock fortified unto martyrdom, whose belief shattered the great Roman Empire, even so in Germany today we are experiencing the same thing. . . . *Adolf Hitler is the true Holy Ghost.*

Another quotation will suffice to convey the idolatrous character of

Hitler worship. It is Pastor Leffler speaking, in his book *Christ in the Third Reich*, and his words "the Savior whom He sent" clearly refer to the *Führer*:

This is our faith: after two thousand years the Eternal has summoned the Germans to fulfil the mission that He laid in the cradle of the race. The world must choose between Israel and Germany. Germany's fate is the fate of the world. God fulfils His will through peoples, through a chosen people. The Savior whom He sent will fill the German people with His salvation.

* * *

In the dark night of our epoch Hitler was the window through which the light fell upon our Christian history. Through him we were able to see our Savior symbolized in German history. In the person of the *Führer* we see God's ambassador who brought Germany face to face with the God of History who called us away from mere lip service to the genuine holy service of the Samaritan.

II

In Russia the process of turning the State into a religion has gone much further. The apotheosis of Stalin is nearly complete. Even the official atheism is religious in its attitudes. The mummified Lenin, Father of Bolshevism, enshrined in his granite tomb on Red Square, has been canonized — the faintest doubt is blasphemy punishable by excommunication — and worship

of Lenin's "best disciple", the current Leader, is open and unashamed. Political discussion has assumed the character of sectarian disputation based on sacred texts. The ubiquitous images of Lenin and Stalin, among a people of icon-worshippers, are not without significance, and the ceremonial parades on holidays are reminiscent of the old religious processions. The periodical "chistkas" or cleansings of the Party membership are increasingly a confessional ritual, marked by contrite breast-beating and ardent acceptance even of sins not committed.

Glorification of Stalin with every year departs more boldly from the rational, and becomes more hysterical in its hallelujah-shouting. In 1935 a World Congress of Writers subscribing to the Stalinist faith was held in Russia. A Russian author, Avdeyenko, was addressing the gathering and his words were broadcast by radio to the entire country. He recited the blessings brought to the world and to him individually by the great Leader, ending every sentence with a ritualistic "Thanks, Stalin!" "Because I feel well, thanks, Stalin! For I am joyous, thanks, Stalin!" And he ended thus: "My wife expects a baby and the first word our child shall pronounce shall be the

name Stalin!" The congregation applauded. It is fantastic to recall that it included such men as André Malraux, Ilya Ehrenburg, Jean Richard Bloch, and Aragon!

We must go to the Psalms of David for hymns of praise matching those intoned to Stalin in his Kremlin. The official organs of the Communist regime, boasting of its materialist philosophy and its scientific approach, publish them prominently, and the Stalinist press abroad, even in the United States, reprints them. From the New York *Daily Worker*, December 21, 1937, we cite the following, composed by a Soviet Daghestan woman and solemnly translated by Isidore Schneider, an American poet:

Above the valley
 The mountain peak,
 Above the peak
 The sky.
 But Stalin,
 Skies have no height
 To equal you,
 Only your thoughts
 Rise higher.
 The stars, the moon,
 Pale before the sun
 That pales in turn
 Before your shining mind.

Inevitably one thinks of the Ps. 95: 4, "The heights of the hills are His." And the Ps. 97:9, "For Thou, Lord, art high above all the earth."

The *Song of Stalin*, written by

Seidik Kvarchia, a Soviet Abkhassian collectivized farmer, and published in English in the Moscow *Daily News*, is very nearly a paraphrase of the Psalmist. Stalin is addressed as "The man who fought in front of all the fighters, Who succored orphans, widows, and the aged; Before whom all enemies do tremble . . ." Compare these lines with "Thou hast subdued under me those who rose up against me (Ps. 18: 39) . . . For the needy shall not always be forgotten (Ps. 9: 18) . . . Thou hast rebuked the heathen and destroyed the wicked (Ps. 9:5)." The *Song of Stalin* continues the paraphrase in the third verse, the collectivized votary leaping from the Old Testament to the New, and borrowing boldly the story of Lazarus raised from the dead:

Who broke the chains that bound our
 feet, now dancing,
 Who opened lips that sing a joyous
 song,
 Who made the mourners change their
 tears for laughter,
 Brought back the dead to life's rejoicing throng.

Who is in heart, in every thought and
 action,
 Most loving, true and wise of Lenin's
 sons —
 Such is the great Stalin.

The same official collection of poems in praise of the Kremlin *Führer* contains a contribution by

a Jewish poet, D. Hofstein, that is ecstatic in its religiosity. It is called *The Man I Sing*. The poet hears the voice of his beloved Stalin in the thunder, the mountains, in the cosmic spaces. Comrade Hofstein begins with a contrite confession that in his benighted youth he believed in Jehovah; then he heard the voice of Stalin speaking in peals of thunder:

As a wistful child I heard that in the
silence
Dwells One who made and governs
every living creature.
That old belief was dashed from me
when first I heard
The peals of thunder loud reverberate
among the mountains
Of the Caucasus — the mountains of
your native country.
O men, enthralled by ancient super-
stitions
I would that you obtain so swift re-
lease as I did.

The poet then goes on to record his conversion to Stalinism, not as a rational or scientific act, but as mystical experience surpassing mere realistic and materialistic understanding:

To men whose minds are lighted by
that lamp of reason
I say: I am convinced that in that
distant moment
Among the mountains of the south I
had a glowing sense
Of coming joy. I sensed the onward
tread of footsteps,
Fleet footsteps of the great and
strenuous years we now live
through —

Such years that I, in song, can sing
my homage
To him whose name like thunder in
the cosmic spaces
Cleanses the breath of all impurities.

Hofstein's song continues with a fanciful reference to the boyhood of Stalin, reminiscent of the Biblical story of the Christ Child confounding the elders at the temple. And the mystical ecstasy ends with these amazing lines:

The sorrow and the pain which falls
on human hearts,
The sorrow and the pain which, bind-
ing hearts together,
Draw men in one great unity
To him who simple is and great,
To him whom men call Stalin.

"To him whom men call Stalin!"

The very words and accents of Scripture. The implication is that the sacred name, his real name, is hidden from mortals, even as the Hebrew Prophets dared not utter the name of *Elohim*. To reveal that name to mortals would be to blind them, and the word *Stalin* must suffice for mortal tongues. The implication is carried through by the Soviet Ukrainian poet, Mikola Bazhan, in *Our Comrade*, likewise published by the English-language daily in Moscow. Its fourth stanza reads:

His name has the ring of the Soviet
millions,
Six letters embody the oneness of aim,
The aim of the millions traversing
your pathway

My country, whose valorous sons are
 your fame.

Not once is the awesome name
 mentioned in the five verses of the
 Ukrainian's hymn. He, the name-
 less one, is established as "six let-
 ters", as "our comrade who stands
 in the grounds of the Kremlin.
 . . . Who is wearing the greatcoat
 Red Army men wear" . . . whose
 "picture is known and revered
 everywhere". The song ends with
 an offer to give life itself to that
 unutterable name that embodies
 the millions and the country:

It were a shame to be niggards, so let
 us be lavish
 And live by that name, every danger
 defying!
 And give you, my country, not frag-
 ments of feeling,
 But all that is grandest in living and
 dying.

Another Psalm to Stalin, by a
 Central Asiatic poet, one Murta-
 zali, apparently echoes the Biblical
 11th Psalm, verse 7, where David
 sings, "How say ye to my soul —
 flee as a bird to thy mountain . . .
 for the righteous Lord loveth
 righteousness; His countenance
 doth behold the upright". The So-
 viet worshipper puts it thus:

O swallow that so gracefully soars,
 O swallow with fast flapping wings,
 O swallow, if I were but thee,
 How swift would I fly to the Kremlin.

* * * *

For even the briefest glimpses
 Of the smile on the face of our Stalin

When he hears the wise words that
 are spoken
 By the men he has made anew.

* * * *

Stalin thou madest us rejoice,
 Rejoice and delight in our strength,
 Rejoice with the truth in our hearts,
 Rejoice and make merry this day.

The People's Poet of Soviet
 Daghestan, Suleiman Stalsky, con-
 tributes a hymn that seems directly
 inspired by the Gospel according to
 John. Its very title, *To the Light of
 the World*, meaning Stalin of
 course, harks back to St. John's
 "That was the true light, which
 lighteth every man that cometh
 into the world". But hearken unto
 Soviet People's Poet Stalsky:

You have preserved 'gainst wiles of
 knave
 The testament that Lenin gave.
 The people from black woes you save;
 You are the world's great light, O
 Stalin.

The poet does not mention that the
 physical testament, Lenin's so-called
 "will", the genuineness of which
 has been admitted by Stalin him-
 self and therefore is no longer dis-
 puted, warned the communists
 against Stalin and urged his re-
 moval from his post. Even distant
 Daghestan cannot be ignorant of
 this. Comrade Stalsky goes on:

The house we dwell in shall not fade,
 Foundations were by Lenin laid.
 This house, we know, shall stand.
 'Twas made
 By you, the cosmic builder Stalin.

Did St. Peter promise any more in his *First Epistle General* when he wrote, "To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." Yea verily the cosmic builder Stalin who godlike never sleeps is God on earth and draws homage from that earth, according to Suleiman Stalsky:

By day and night you keep the fort,
All earth responds to your clear
thought,
And Suleiman would have men
taught
That happiness is sown by Stalin!

Nor are these things merely poetical exuberance. The feeling behind it is indisputably religious, mystical, on a rarefied plane of experience. Even in cold prose the name of Stalin is almost always written in capital letters in the Soviet press. In identifying group pictures where Stalin appears, his name is always mentioned first, though he might be standing somewhere in the middle of the line-up. The daily newspapers do not hesitate to refer to him as "Stalin, our sun. . . ." And even in far-off

America, a writer in *The New Masses*, a communist weekly, shares in the religious ecstasy. Writing of a very bad film about Lenin, he exults: "There is something *cleansing and noble* about it, just as there is something fine and touching about a visit to Lenin's tomb."

A religion in its initial stage is rarely recognized by its unbelieving contemporaries. The exaggerations of Leader-worship, whether by writers at home or converts in America, seem to them merely political ravings. But if the faiths launched in the new Meccas—Moscow and Berlin—should happen to survive and flourish, these ravings will be accepted as divinely inspired. Little do the hymn-singers of the *New Masses*, for instance, realize that they are candidates for apostleship. Meanwhile, the emerging religions are confronted with the competition of older religions. The conflict between dictatorships and established churches is not incidental, but inevitable and basic.



KING JAMES I OF MICHIGAN

BY OLAND D. RUSSELL

OF ALL the legendary sovereigns in American history, from Aaron Burr to Father Divine, none ruled so completely and autocratically as King James Jesse Strang of Beaver Island in Lake Michigan. He dictated the laws of his domain, rigidly prescribed the conduct of his 3000 subjects, coined money of his realm — and in the end fell because the homespun bloomers he forced upon the women of his kingdom were too scratchy.

If the King had been content to let his women wear panties of their own devising, and of more soothing material, his reign might have been longer than six years. But he was a stickler for morality. While he had five wives, and permitted his subjects to contract such polygamous unions as were consistent with their desires and abilities, he was not one for promiscuity. To curb any moral irregularity in his frontier domain, and particularly to keep his women safe from the predatory fishermen who clung to the fringes of his island, the King devised a bloomer-pantaloon un-

dergarment which was the first and only chastity belt ever contrived in this free republic. From waist to knee the bloomers encased the wearer in a strait-jacket of durable homespun. At the knee they were gathered in with draw-strings which ordinarily doubled for garters. Ankle-length skirts were worn over the bloomers. Winters are long on windswept Beaver Island and the outfit was decidedly practical — but too controversial.

King James was crowned on July 8, 1850 as the "Apostle, Prophet, Seer, Revelator and Translator" of the "Kingdom of Beaver Island" with considerable impressive ad-libbing by one George J. Adams, an ex-Boston ham actor. Some years later Adams reluctantly testified in Federal court that he was the Apostle Paul of Beaver Island and that he found it convenient and convincing to wear an old Richard III costume when apostling.

The King himself was no awesome or compelling figure but, like so many others who have

mingled religion with autocratic aspirations, he possessed a dexterity of throat and vocal chords, playing on a wide range of sounds and words that magnetized his followers, particularly women. In stature, he was small and spare, with a dolichocephalic head that sprouted a heavy, reddish beard and hair. His massive forehead went dewy white with perspiration when he turned on the particular type of oratory that seems reserved for exhorters.

James Jesse Strang was born on a farm near Scipio, New York, on March 12, 1813. An omnivorous reader in early childhood, he soon was claiming descent from Henry de l'Estrange, a man-at-arms with one of the Dukes of York. And, somewhat to the surprise of his parents, he contended his ancestors had been Jews for ten generations back, but conceded that "the admixture of other blood was so large that the Semitic strain seems to be quite lost". Self-taught from borrowed law texts, he was admitted to the New York bar at the age of 23. But, instead of settling down to a law practice after marrying he moved about the State, changing jobs frequently. He taught for a while in a rural school, edited a weekly paper, and lectured on temperance. In 1843 Strang moved

to Burlington, Wisconsin, and set up as a lawyer. Almost immediately he came under the influence of the Mormon church.

The Mormons, lately driven out of Missouri because of their Abolitionist tendencies and an inclination to delve into State politics, had founded the city of Nauvoo on the east bank of the Mississippi in Illinois. The Nauvoo colony of twenty thousand was industriously sending out missionaries in 1843, and when two of the saints visited Burlington they found a ready disciple in the young lawyer. Strang went to Nauvoo for baptism by the Prophet, Joseph Smith. He returned with authority to plant a "stake" in Burlington. A year later when an Illinois mob killed the Prophet and his brother, Strang rushed to Nauvoo with the announcement that he was the divinely-chosen Prophet. In this he clashed with the brilliant Brigham Young and the issue was not settled without a schism in the church.

To fortify his claims for leadership, Strang, emulating Joseph Smith, dug up his own hieroglyphic plates from under the roots of an oak tree on White River in Illinois. His talent for oratory and impromptu speaking served him well as he publicly translated the

plates. Whereas the uneducated Smith had to do his translating from behind a curtain, Strang with a minimum of difficulty read off the divine message from the cabalistic "Plates of Laban" which he said were "older than the Babylonian captivity of the Jews". He soon won about 2,000 followers in Nauvoo and moved them to Voree, Wisconsin, while Brigham Young led the rest in the overland trek to Utah. At Voree, Strang set up a communal form of government, the Mormons living as one family and holding all things in common. He organized the church on the same lines that had existed at Nauvoo, even dispatching missionaries to the East and Canada.

Among the early converts attracted to Voree from the East was a 19-year-old school teacher, Elvira Eliza Field. Miss Field's impressionable curves very soon caused Strang to tack a bit in his theological course. He already was on record, in an editorial printed in the Voree *Herald* in 1847, as condemning polygamy and assailing the Brighamite Mormons for advocating plural marriages. Under the circumstances he could not propose any such union with the beautiful Elvira without proper supernatural explanation. So Strang

called in his faithful Apostle Paul and ordained him to a new task. The Apostle told Elvira that Strang had received from an "angelic messenger" a new record of the law of God embracing two principal points: that Strang should move his colony to a new site and set up a "kingdom", and that polygamy should be encouraged in the new kingdom. Strang volunteered to set the example for a polygamous society by taking Elvira as his second wife, but he suggested that as long as the colony remain in Voree they keep the marriage secret. Elvira agreed, and they were married.

Strang took both his wives on a second honeymoon to the East, doing missionary work on the side. Still concealing his second marriage, the leader had Elvira cut off her long hair and dress in a man's clothes. She accompanied the Strangs as "Charles J. Douglas", a secretary. Back in the colony there was some adverse gossip when one of the saints wrote home that Strang's secretary revealed suspicious curves, but resentment died down when the prophet hurried home to unfold his more ambitious plan for a kingdom where, among other features, all the saints would be permitted to live in unstinted polygamy.

Strang had realized from the start that Voree was only a temporary location. He had seen the Mormons driven out of Missouri and then Illinois by Gentile opposition. He was convinced that his sect could not exist in peace side by side with the fiercely monogamous American frontiersman. Casting about for a more suitable site for his colony he came upon Beaver Island in Lake Michigan, an ideal spot, remote enough from civil authorities and still not too distant from the main line of Great Lakes travel. An exploration trip with four companions revealed the island's advantages. It was fifteen miles long and six miles wide, with thousands of fertile, unused acres. Leaving two companions to start a clearing in the interior, Strang and the other two saints went back to Voree and began preparations for moving. During the winter a series of heavenly visions (to Strang) further enhanced the prospects of the island kingdom. The *Voree Herald* chronicled the visions in terms not unlike a realtor's prospectus. The following summer, with their own schooner in operation, the Mormons began their migration in numbers, and swarmed over the island picking out choice tracts. An added feature of the Beaver Island

kingdom was to be private ownership of land and abandonment of the communistic government. The several hundred Indians and Gentile fishermen and fur traders on the island grumbled, and heaved an occasional tomahawk at the oncoming Mormons, but were quickly outnumbered.

By the spring of 1850 virtually the entire Voree colony had been transferred to Beaver Island. A saw-mill was going, a road led into the interior, a printing press was putting out daily decrees of the leader, and houses were going up fast. Strang reorganized the colony, making church and state one, with himself as head of both, and decided to top this off with a splendid coronation ceremony and a real crown. He set July 8, 1850, for the coronation but almost ran into a serious *coup d'état* before he could be crowned.

When the non-Mormons on the island got wind of the plan, they appealed for help from other islanders, and from Mackinac, for a mass-assault to prevent the coronation. Taking advantage of the national holiday, the Gentiles planned their counter-attack for July 4. Tipped off by his own spies, Strang hastily organized a rough militia, armed with rifles and shotguns, brought a muzzle-loading

field piece from the mainland and laid in a stock of powder. For a navy he chartered a second large schooner in Chicago and anchored his two ships at strategic points in the harbor.

The Gentile invasion started July 3 and on the morning of the Fourth a formidable array of whiskered bravos had turned up in the harbor. They spent the morning consuming their whisky rations, and before they could organize for the land assault the Mormons opened up with their field piece, sending cannon balls skimming over the water around the invading fleet. When two ships were hit, the Gentiles sent a delegation ashore to protest and look over the defensive forces. The Mormons blandly explained they were firing "national salutes" and were sorry if the shots came too close. This bold attitude considerably daunted the invaders. As the whisky ran out, they returned to the fishing grounds, leaving Strang full freedom to go ahead.

The coronation took place four days later in the half-finished log tabernacle, the main assembly building on the island. The Apostle Paul drew on his Shakespearian training for proper decorative effects. Strang wore a bright red robe and white surplice, looking a

little like a Santa Claus with sorrel whiskers. The crown was "a plain metal circlet with a cluster of stars projecting in front". The entire population of 2500 crowded in and around the tabernacle. The spectacle lasted several hours.

II

As wielder of supreme power on Beaver Island, the King began to clamp down on his subjects. He drew up his own laws and punishments. Some of his laws were in conflict with State and Federal statutes, which worried King James not at all. Of island taboos, one of Strang's wives later wrote:

The use of tea, coffee and tobacco, as well as of liquor was prohibited. . . . Bylaws of the Kingdom were adopted and published, and every household possessed a copy. They were very strict in all that regulated society, morals and religious observances and absolute obedience was enjoined. The seventh day [Saturday] was set apart as the Sabbath and every person physically able was commanded to attend church on that day. The saints [i.e. all members of the Church] were required to pay one tenth of all they raised, earned or received into the public fund and the tithing was used for improvements, taking care of the poor and paying State, county, and township taxes. No other taxes were levied. Schools were organized and flourished. A printing office of sufficient capacity to publish all the papers,

books, etc., needed for the church was maintained. No betting or gaming was permitted but the rules were very liberal in the matter of amusements.

The tabernacle was the center of most of these amusements and also served as a place of worship and throne-room for the King. For convenience Strang had a throne built on wheels. It was a circular platform with seats around the edge for the Twelve Apostles and a higher seat in the center for the sovereign. When the tabernacle was used as a dance hall or theater, the throne was wheeled back out of sight behind a back-drop on the pulpit that doubled for a stage. Several debating clubs flourished, the King himself taking part and furnishing material from his library of several thousand books.

Of the sovereign's matrimonial life, perhaps none summed it up so accurately and simply as Wife Number Four, who wrote that "He made things pleasant for us". Notably enough four of the King's wives bore him a posthumous child apiece, possibly a unique record in American vital statistics. The King's five wives were Mary, Elvira, Betsy, Sarah, and Phoebe, wed in that order. Mary, Elvira, and Betsy each bore him four children and Sarah and Phoebe one apiece. Most likely Sarah and

Phoebe were earmarked for another three each but the prophet's death interfered.

Each of the royal wives was accounted pretty except Betsy. The story was that Betsy, an old maid of 31, was teased at a King's Day party and she retorted that there was only one man on the island she would marry. Everybody, including the King, supposed she meant the ruler and more in a spirit of curiosity than ardor, he proposed. His suspicion proved accurate, and he gallantly married homely Betsy. Then, as if prompted by a second thought, he took two brides, 17 and 18, three months apart. They were Sarah and Phoebe. Years later Sarah, the last surviving widow, wrote:

We all lived in the same house, but we had different rooms and all met in prayer and ate at the same table. He [the King] was a very mild-spoken, kind man to his family, although his word was law.

Her testimony as to the separate rooms for the wives differed slightly from that of a Federal officer who visited Beaver Island with a warrant for Strang near the end of his reign. The officer told of finding what appeared to be a common bedroom on the second floor of the King's log palace —

a long low room, where wide berths heavily draped with stunning calico,

shielded beds like the berths and staterooms of steamers, which proved to be occupied by Mormon women four in a bed.

Such goings-on naturally shocked the mainland and soon Detroit, Cleveland, and Buffalo newspapers were calling for the dethronement of King James and a clean-up on Beaver Island. Sensational news stories had it that bands of Mormons made night raids on mainland towns and seized the prettiest girls for the royal bedchamber. President Fillmore, visiting his brother in Detroit, was given a lurid account of the polygamous free-booters of Beaver Island and started the machinery in motion to bring Strang to trial. The Coast Guard steamer *Michigan*, the first iron-clad on the Great Lakes, ferried a heavily-armed Federal posse over to Beaver Island in June, 1851, and Strang was seized by a ruse, together with his twelve apostles, and taken to Detroit for trial on charges of treason, counterfeiting, interfering with the United States Mail, contempt of court, and odds and ends totaling twelve counts.

The Detroit trial had many elements of the modern circus trials. The courtroom was jammed for thirty days by a crowd eager to hear details of polygamy and rampant sin on the island. United States Attorney George C. Bates

conducted the government's case before a judge who was determined that the Mormon religion was not to be an issue. Strang conducted his own defense. About 120 witnesses testified, mostly Mormons who would say anything for the King. A typical witness was a Mrs. McCullouch, "a very sweet and accomplished lady from Baltimore who had joined these people", according to Bates. One exchange, on cross-examination, went like this:

Q. Can it be possible that you are so blind as to really believe that that fellow who sits there beneath you — that Strang — is the prophet of the Lord, the successor of Him who bore his cross among the jeers and sneers of Mount Calvary?

A. Yes, you impudent District Attorney, and were you not a darned old fool, you would know it too. [Witness rose and shook her fist in the District Attorney's face while answering.]

The embattled King made a confident and dramatic speech to the jury that won praise even from the prosecutor. He compared himself to Christ, the government lawyers to Pharisees, and, Bates wrote, made the jury feel, "that there was a divinity that did hedge him as a king."

In the end, despite violent local prejudice and constant press attacks, Strang and the twelve apostles were acquitted of all charges.

III

Strang went back to Beaver Island more a King than ever. His prestige had increased even among the mainland Gentiles. In 1853 he entered politics and with his solid Beaver Island vote, defeated four other candidates for a seat in the Michigan Legislature. There he flirted with the Democrats and got through a bill uniting Beaver, Fox, and Manitou Islands as Manitou county, which gave him control of all the civil-law machinery for those islands. At the end of the session the *Detroit Advertiser* said:

Mr. Strang's course as a member of the present Legislature has disarmed much of the prejudice which had previously surrounded the local head, throughout this session he has conducted himself with a degree of decorum and propriety which have been equalled by his industry, sagacity, good temper, and apparent regard for the true interests of the people.

Two years later he was re-elected. Meanwhile he found time, besides administering the affairs of Beaver Island, to prepare for the Smithsonian Institution a paper which was printed in 1855 under the title, *Some Remarks on the Natural History of Beaver Island, Michigan*. He had entree at the White House and, recalling his old feud with Brigham Young, once

asked President Pierce to appoint him governor of Utah.

As Strang's prestige soared and his authority spread, he increased the severity of restrictions among his subjects. Resentment against his frequent infliction of corporal punishment — "thirty lashes with a birch rod" — grew into smoldering rebellion and many Mormons began openly to ignore his laws against tea, coffee, liquor, and tobacco. This defiance enraged the King and he publicly denounced the violators. He broke with his old prime minister, the Apostle Paul, charging that the Apostle's newest wife was a prostitute. He threatened to have her "ridden around the Bay on a black-horned buck with her face backwards and the boys to hoot at her". And, as a culminating mistake, the King kept his women subjects in homespun panties.

Mrs. Thomas Bedford returned from a mainland trip one early Spring day of 1856 and planted her foot down. King or no King, she told her husband, she would no longer wear those coarse, unbecoming garments. The news spread about. The King sent for the luckless Mr. Bedford. He told him that his wife would have to wear the specified panties or that he would suffer the consequences.

Strangely enough, Mr. Bedford upheld his wife in her revolt. The King had Mr. Bedford horse-whipped. Another malcontent, Alexander Wentworth, had been whipped for drinking. With the support, if not instigation of their wives, Wentworth and Bedford connived the riddance of King James. On June 16, 1856, Wentworth and Bedford, armed with a horse pistol apiece, lay in wait for the King behind two piles of cordwood at the main island dock. As the King walked out to board a boat, Wentworth rose from behind one woodpile and shot him in the head.

From all accounts, Strang was as hard to kill as Rasputin. The first shot pitched him forward on the ground. He turned over and started to rise when Wentworth shot him again, in the face just below the right eye. As Bedford emerged to give him the *coup*, Strang rose again, grabbing for Bedford's leg. Then Bedford shot, and the bullet ploughed a course up the King's spine. Then both assassins beat him about the face until he sank back unconscious. But still he did not die. Loyal saints rushed from a nearby store and carried him inside, where he was treated by a Coast Guard surgeon.

That night they carried the King to the mainland, where he would be safe from any further uprising on the island. He lived until July 9, attended by two of his wives, Betsy and Phoebe, and was buried in an unmarked grave in a cow pasture near Voree. Several years later one of Strang's daughters had the coffin dug up and moved to a grave in Burlington, Wisconsin.

The island kingdom had begun to disintegrate even before the King's death. Now the leaderless Mormons scattered in all directions. Many went to Utah and were received into the Brigham Young church. The Apostle Paul was reported to have led one group to Africa where he abandoned them, returning to his old love, the stage. Their numbers decimated, the remaining Mormons put up little resistance when a mob of fishermen raided the colony a year later, burned the tabernacle, looted the "palace", and drove the last of the sect off the island.

Today on lonely Beaver Island, St. James is still the principal village and the road that leads into the interior is the King's Highway. There is a Lake Galilee and a Jordan brook, but little else that is reminiscent of America's unique kingdom.

I AM A REACTIONARY

By CHANNING POLLOCK

WERE I to declare myself a sadist, a hired incendiary, or a grave robber, people would be less startled and antagonistic than when I say I am a Reactionary. Several months ago, I decided to confess the fact in the title of a new lecture. My manager was aghast, but announced the subject. After which program chairmen, equally aghast, ignored the announcement, and engaged me to speak on Victorian poets or the contemporary theater. Finally a group in Milwaukee determined to take a chance if the talk might be announced as "History Repeats Itself." For two months, audiences were deceived into hearing my confession under such canonic captions as "America at the Cross Roads" or "The Path That Leads Ahead," and then the Executives' Club, of Chicago, boldly admitted willingness to entertain the forces of reaction — or, at least, to learn what they were — and, after that, the going was easy.

Americans are not given to definition. If someone in popular favor invents or employs a word or

phrase as approbative, or opprobrious, or incitant, we carry on, and damned be him that first cries, "Hold, enough!" Both Roosevelts have been apt at this sort of thing, and thousands of my fellow citizens cringe under terms applied by the current Roosevelt that could be robbed of their sting by the merest glance at any good dictionary or outline of history. Since, apparently, few of us trouble ourselves in this fashion, the terms Reactionary and Conservative have joined *laissez faire* and *status quo* as the dirtiest words in the lexicon. Today, no one minds the epithet about which Owen Wister's Virginian said, "When you call me that, *smile*," but any demagogue can settle an opponent's hash by fastening upon him the label of Reactionary.

The word has come to be used in describing anyone who differs with us about anything. "Third terms," Professor Tugwell asserts, "find support among progressives, and opposition among reactionaries." Earl Browder, the communist,

says much of the New Deal is Reactionary; the Trotskyists find functioning communism Reactionary, and functioning communism finds Trotsky so Reactionary that he is compelled to do his reacting in Mexico. One is reminded of the short story that, nearly half a century ago, established the reputation of a magazine named the *Black Cat*. Somebody gave its hero a card that made him a pariah. Whoever saw the card, turned away from its possessor in anger and disgust, but the unfortunate man never knew what the pasteboard signified, and neither did the reader.

In my extreme youth, I wrote the editor of the *Black Cat* that its tale had no validity for me until I was informed of, and could weigh the evidence on, that card. A similar skepticism recently sent me to the Century Dictionary, where I learn that Reaction is merely resistance to another action, and that a conservative is one who conserves, which, in turn, is to "preserve from loss, decay, injury, or violation." Herbert Spencer is quoted as saying that "Every trespass produces a reaction, which is extreme in proportion as the trespass is great," and when, secondarily, I find conservatism defined as disposition to adhere to an estab-

lished order, I find, also, that early in the last century Macaulay called it "the new cant word."

A progressive is one who "moves forward in space," and apparently in any direction, and liberal, derived from Liber, the ancient god of wine, obviously implies a certain looseness and intoxication. In *Henry VIII*, Shakespeare warns, "When you are liberal, be sure you are not loose." Liberal is "unrestrained, unchecked, licentious." It is also "to be liberal with one's money" — nothing is said of being liberal with other people's money — and "to be liberal to an opponent — free from narrow limitations — tolerant." Herbert Spencer returns to bat with "Those who now pass as Liberals are Tories of a new type," which must brand Herbert as a mouthpiece of Privilege and Economic Royalty to anyone who happens not to have read *Principles of Sociology* or *Man vs. State*.

However, you may argue that words actually have the meaning they convey to any considerable number of persons, and, therefore, that words which convey nothing to most of us have no meaning at all. Admitting this, it is plainly our business to ascertain what the seven or eight hundred words in common use suggest to those who repeat them oftenest. From this point of

view, Conservative and Reactionary are practically synonymous, describing anyone who wishes to restore or return to anything. Thus, a man who ran into a burning building, and wanted to run out again, would be a Reactionary. If you would like to see Austria restored to the Austrians, or Canton to the Chinese, then, in the current significance of the term, you are a Reactionary. As a matter of fact, Japan adopted this conception when, in his New Year's message to the nation, Foreign Minister Hachiro Arita denounced those Western powers "which are trying to readjust the new situation in China created by the hostilities, on the basis of anachronistic ideas." To cling or return to any state of affairs is Conservative and Reactionary, so that, clearly, if we had all been Conservatives there would have been no Dark Ages, and, without Reactionaries, there could have been no Renaissance.

Being agreed that a Reactionary is one who proposes to go back, it seems to me that, before loading the word with ignominy, we should inquire, "Go back to *what*?" If everything that *was* is wrong, and everything replacing it is right, or even more nearly right, there can be no question that public policy requires frowning on Reaction. We

should be behaving sensibly and properly in condemning anyone who advocated return to the practice of bleeding in cases of fever. On the other hand, there is at least something to be said for the musician who prefers Wagner to Honegger, or for the drama lover who would revive Shakespeare rather than produce Living Newspapers. I should think that no motion in space, forward or back, Progressive or Reactionary, can be estimated without reference to the desirability of its goal.

II

On the edge of my fifty-ninth birthday, I seem to recall a good many agreeable and desirable conditions in the world we have left behind. And, because I am an old foggy, perhaps, I fail to find much reason for rejoicing in that we have achieved. Unless my memory is at fault, we were a pretty happy race up to the Great War. Who's happy now? Who'd bet a plugged nickel on what tomorrow will bring, or whether he'll be here when the package arrives? You can't read a newspaper without getting a headache. A friend writes me that, a year ago last Christmas, the London *Times* appeared with a big headline, "No Bad News Today"

—and that *was* news! All the metropolitan dailies I saw last January first ascribed the uniquely frenzied celebration of the night before to a state of general desperation — what the New York *Herald Tribune* called “a tense, uncertain feeling like that of a man holding a lighted bomb.”

In 1914, the world had not known a major war since 1871, nor a general war since 1815. A man's chance of being killed in battle, according to Lloyd's, was a fraction too infinitesimal to be quoted, and his chance — or a woman's or a child's — of being killed at home or in the street because of war was precisely nil. We had not yet arrived at the high civilization in which whole populations, including babies and dogs, were provided with bomb shelters and trained to use gas masks. Since those famous Dark Ages, and even before, fighting had been confined to armies, and kept within the bounds of international law. Reporting a battle, Whitelaw Reid wrote to the New York *Tribune*:

Sharp-shooters in the town were picking off our officers because they knew we did not want to shell a place occupied by civilians. At last, one of our guns was directed “against” the house from which they were firing. It was the only house we harmed in Gettysburg.

Plainly, it is Reaction to compare Gettysburg with Barcelona and Shanghai!

Racial persecution as a government policy practically ended in the Fifteenth Century. Even then, the Jews driven from Spain found refuge in Holland. Our progress in pogroms must go unchallenged; this is the first time a race has been persecuted everywhere, and received nowhere. If we had merely returned to the oppressions of Ferdinand and Isabella, I might question here, as I hope to do later, how much of our progress is really Reaction, in the present meaning of the word, but, in this one thing, undeniably we are making history rather than repeating it. No recorded bigotry, brutality, and barbarism compares with this achievement of our enlightened age. Any open-minded commentator must admit that insistence upon even comparatively decent treatment of Semitic peoples — or, in some cases, of Catholics or other Christians — takes us back into a period beginning about the time Columbus discovered America.

Much of our recent progress has been even more Reactionary, but, in almost every case, one must admit improvement on the pattern. A former paperhanger, not an early Vandal, has decreed the re-

turn to paganism in Germany, and state opposition to religion is an entirely new development in Russia and Spain. New, also, is the patrolling of borders with bloodhounds to prevent the escape of nationals, and government forging of letters asking help for citizens from their relatives elsewhere in order to sweat the money from the unlucky recipients. Our modern world has surpassed the Middle Ages in its use of secret police, women and children as hostages, assassination, mass-murder and torture, incarceration and execution without public trial. The Czars imprisoned as many as ten persons in dungeons built to hold two, but I am told that the Bolsheviks have increased this number to sixty. The Czars whipped rebellious serfs; Eugene Lyons asserts that now, after the whipping, they are shipped to Arctic forests. Communism restored the serfdom abolished by Alexander II, and took away from its workers privileges given them by Nicholas I. Forced labor was abolished by civilized nations a century ago, but, last August, 300,000 "labor conscripts" toiled sixteen hours a day on forts in Germany, and, before that, 2,000,000 prisoners on the Baltic-White Sea Canal, new Siberian railways, and other projects. This is certainly

progress; only slightly more than half that number of slaves were mobilized by the Pharaohs.

But, you will say, I have gone far afield for results of advance from that benighted old world in which humanity stumbled and suffered without producing anything worth keeping, until, within the last decade, inspired and unselfish leadership brought us into the Promised Land. Is this promised land all foreign soil, and has our own New Deal contributed nothing to relief of that universal and unmitigated misery which afflicted mankind up to The Age of the Great Beneficence? Has our country had no part in the dawn of order, security, social justice, and cosmic bliss? From what and to what have we progressed in the United States?

In his comprehensive *Epic of America*, James Truslow Adams finds that the most important forward step in civilization was made here one hundred and fifty-two years ago. "The American dream," to which he refers constantly, was "insistence on work," and on freedom in work and the enjoyment of the fruits thereof. Our citizens "were not engaged in building a Utopia. Their hope was that each would be freer . . . and more independent. . . . (They) never at-

tempted to make all things new at a stroke of the pen," but they achieved — and the achievement was disseminated over most of the world — government whose "only end is the good of every man in all his rights, his life, liberty, estate, honor." Ogden Mills writes, in *The Seventeen Million*, that "the adoption of the constitution had world-wide effect. . . . The planned and controlled economies were thrown into political ash-cans. . . . The century preceding the Great War had witnessed the growth of humanitarianism — the spread of democratic ideals — the development of free enterprise — the expansion of international trade, and of intercourse between nations, until practically the entire globe had become intimately united as an immense co-operative workshop." After thousands of years of effort, "Men ceased to be pawns of the State."

From this condition, our progress has been rapid and complete. Two years after it began, a tailor in New Jersey was sent to jail for charging five cents less than the price set by the government for pressing a pair of pants. A merchant in Minnesota was unable to allow his sick clerk an extra half hour for luncheon until Administration Order No. 60-318 had

declared that "whereas" and "now, therefore, pursuant to authority vested . . . the approval of this petition is not contrary to the policy of the National Recovery Act." Unhampered by Reactionaries, we moved onward apace. The American Revolution had been brought about largely by unreasonable taxation, taxation without representation, interference with our commerce, search and seizure without due process of law, and the fact that King George "has enacted a multitude of other offices and sent swarms of other officers to harass our people and eat out their substance." After a hundred and fifty-two years of immunity from these abuses, we find ourselves with an average tax of twenty-five cents out of every dollar. The Federal government takes as great a part as 79 per cent of a citizen's annual income, and 70 per cent of what remains of his estate after death. Obviously, this isn't likely to be much. If we add to that 79 per cent maximum Federal Income Tax, a State Income Tax that, in New York, reaches 8 per cent, and a few supplementary taxes, we discover that it is quite possible for a citizen to earn enough to have nothing and owe the government money.

We have advanced in a circle to

the point at which this man — the productive citizen — is taxed wholly without representation. He has no more voice in government by majority than a deaf mute in government by acclamation. Our legislators are elected by the people who pay no taxes, must satisfy only this controlling class, and have learned that the tax-free are best satisfied with punitive measures against those who maintain them. The result has been modern improvements in interference with commerce, industry, agriculture, and labor relations that put King George in his place as an Outstanding Exponent of *Dolce Far Niente*. This phase of our progress is too familiar to require demonstration. We all know that no one can grow cotton or pigs, hire men or fire even those who destroy his property, work a greater number of hours, produce more or trade in anything without Federal supervision and consent. In the restriction of individual initiative and liberty, we have all but matched the headway of Germany, which regulates the length of a citizen's shirt-tail, or Russia, which recently executed a merchant for storing his shop-window dummies in a damp cellar.

Search and seizure without process of law has been abolished by

legalizing search and seizure without process of law. The smallest business now utilizes most of the time of one clerk to make reports to Washington, and no warrant of any kind is required by the revenue or other government agent who inspects your books and papers. Unless one is asking for trouble, the decisions of these agents have all the effect of statute. Anyone of us who does anything offensive to government may be, and is, dragged before investigating committees, and an early defiance of the Forces of Reaction found a committee, whose chairman was rewarded by appointment to the Supreme Court, rifling the files of a telegraph company, and carrying away whatever messages it thought might prove interesting. Of the offices and officers who "harass our people and eat out their substance," it is necessary to say only that, at the moment, they outnumber, three to one, the private soldiers in the army of poor, limited King George. A fifth of our population now feeds at the public trough.

III

There have been other and similar ameliorations too many for mention, opposition to any and all of

which is confined to Reactionaries. Among these are included the confiscation of gold, credit inflation and impending currency inflation, repudiation of the government's covenants with its citizens; threatened, and, to some extent, actual suppression of free speech and a free press, and the attempted — and, to some extent, actual — coercion of voters, legislators, and the Supreme Court. All this, on the word of our Chief Liberal, and his followers, was rendered urgent and necessary by the state to which the aforesaid *laissez faire* of his predecessors reduced this unhappy commonwealth. One third of the nation was — and, incidentally, still is — ill-nourished, ill-clad, and ill-housed. Four per cent of our population, according to Father Coughlin, owned 87 per cent of the wealth.

Father Coughlin is a person whose mind dwells chiefly among the intangibles, and sometimes I think he writes all his own statistics. Anyway, I am more inclined to credit Robert Rutherford Deane, who tells us that, in 1930, net incomes over \$5,000 accounted for only 10 per cent of national income, and those over \$100,000 for less than 1 per cent. Dr. Deane estimates that 91 per cent of our adults owned property. My faith

in these figures, rather than in the gloomier ones of Messrs. Roosevelt and Coughlin, is due less to Dr. Deane's superior standing as an economist than to certain confirmations that have never been questioned. Before our hand-steered full-speed-ahead began, one of every 4.9 persons in the United States owned an automobile, and a larger number owned radios. This would give quite a lot of cars to the ill-fed and ill-clad, and, as a matter of fact, last summer one of our communities threatened to discipline its citizens on Relief by taking away their motor licenses.

Of approximately 25,000,000 heads of families, in 1932, 14,000,000 owned their homes, and 6,500,000 their farms. The tax valuation of these homes was \$48,000,000,000. Nearly 18,000,000 of the homes had telephones. In spite of rates so prohibitive that the government had to enter into competition with the utilities, 17,000,000 out of 25,000,000 privately-owned homes were electric-lighted. There were 63,000,000 life insurance policies, 44,000,000 savings-bank accounts, and 24,000,000 registered security holders. We spent \$10,000,000,000 a year for recreation and amusements, and so much on cosmetics and beauty shops that a mere man

wonders why we aren't a nation of Phrynes and Cleopatras.

Plainly, this was a dreadful state of affairs, and one to which only Special Privilege would care to return. It's a good thing that, within a short time, came the dawn of Social Justice. During the preceding eighty years, while Lincoln, Cleveland, Theodore Roosevelt, Wilson, Coolidge, and Hoover, sunk in that shocking *laissez faire*, were doing practically nothing to help the forgotten man, wages increased only 500 per cent. At the end of this period, the manufacturing companies were paying 80 per cent of their income in wages; if every penny of profit had been turned over to the workers, their earnings would have been increased 8 per cent. In 1890, the average work-week was sixty hours; in 1930, it was forty-eight. Obviously, if this ratio had continued, and nature been allowed to take its course, we should have been one hundred and sixty years reaching that millennium at which the workers did no work at all.

Even under the New Order, only about 13,000,000 of us seem to have arrived at this consummation with any certainty of permanence. However, we must be fair: most of these wouldn't have arrived at all under the Old Order,

and, if they had, comparatively few of them would have been maintained by the government. In that inchoate civilization, the philanthropy of politicians was still in the rudimentary stage of giving cigars and picnics; nobody had discovered that high office was to be attained and retained by paying constituents for not working and for what they didn't produce, and taking the money from those who did both. This, I believe, is what is known as Redistribution of Wealth.

It was a simple, silly old world — that upon which we Reactionaries look back with criminal nostalgia. No Wages and Hours Bill, no Wagner Act, no National Labor Relations Administration, and yet it was possible to walk a city block without running into a picket line, or to ride a city block without meeting a brick thrown through the taxi window. Masons, carpenters, and painters earned only from twelve to sixteen dollars a day — about twice what my father received as editor of a newspaper in Salt Lake or as United States Consul at San Salvador. However, my father was able to save \$500 a year. Eggs were twelve cents a dozen then, and the best Porterhouse steak twelve and one-half cents a pound. Cocktails were two for a

quarter. And, in those Neolithic times, when you put a dollar into a bond or a savings bank, you knew it would still be a dollar when you got it out.

In that world without Social Justice, nobody proposed taxing a business forty-one cents as against every thirty-nine cents it paid in wages, so that the business had to shut down and add 1800 men to the millions maintained out of such taxes. Our government levied almost no taxes up to 1913, when its cost was \$725,000,000. This year of grace, our tax-bill is about \$13,000,000,000, leaving us in debt nearly \$40,000,000,000, with an additional \$10,000,000,000 asked of Congress — and us — as another blank check to meet another national emergency. With progress, national emergencies have become as continuously recurrent and as universal as heart-beats. Reaction harks back to disorder in which more than half the population of the globe had yet to come under control of dictators of such omniscience and omnipotence that they can map out the lives and loves and hopes and fears of 700,000,000 people. Ethiopia was still ruled by the Ethiopians, Austria by the Austrians, and Czechoslovakia by the Czechs; international law remained in force, and

we could still be shocked at the violation of a treaty. Spain and China were at peace under their anachronistic governments; Japan and Germany were winning places in the sun without recourse to arms; France and Britain and America pursued the even tenor of pleasant ways; grace and courage and honor and idealism were common attributes, and there was less hunger and more security than at any time since Security with a big S became an excuse for every invasion of personal and property rights.

But in all this, of course, were the seeds of disaster. The old order brought about World War. We abolished it, and ever since we've been facing a bigger and better World War. It brought a great financial depression, so we went in for planned economy, and made the depression permanent. We wanted redistribution of wealth by government edict, so now we're all broke, including the government. Capitalism had outlived its usefulness, some of us thought, since when we've discovered that the alternative is state capitalism, which is neither as kind, nor as honest, efficient, and successful. We've vulgarized, dehumanized, incapacitated, and muddled the world, and are so proud of the outcome that

we have the unmitigated gall to sneer at and condemn Reactionaries. More than two thirds of our planet is at the mercy of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: hell-bent for Utopia, and fairly certain of getting to one place or the other!

What do they mean by Reactionaries? The worst of us are red-shirted radicals compared to our rulers; we merely want to retain what was good thirty years ago — they want to revive what was bad in the Dark Ages. There's scarcely anything new in their world that wasn't old and evident futility in that of Augustus and Diocletian. All we've accomplished is the utter demoralization of our citizenry, and national and international

chaos. All we've achieved is world-wide bankruptcy — mental, moral, and physical; world-wide loss of liberty, dignity, and decency; the collapse of democracy, the collapse of industry and economy, the collapse of everything that kept this globe whirling in normal evolutionary approach to ultimate order and justice. Who cares? Most of us have only fifty or sixty years left to live, and by then we may have got our civilization out of the woods, and back onto a good, hard, well-traveled road.

I, for one, have seen enough of forward-marching into the blackest pages of history. If what we have now is the result of progress, I AM a Reactionary — crying, "Let's go back to the path that leads ahead!"



IMPOLITE REMINDER

The high contracting parties solemnly declare in the names of their respective peoples that they condemn recourse to war for the solution of international controversies, and renounce it as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another. — PACT OF PARIS, August 27, 1928.

THE HIGH COST OF LAWING

BY VICTOR C. CORMIER

ELMER PRINDLE, a meek law-abiding American — we might say *the* meek, law-abiding American — is seriously injured while riding in a taxicab which crashes into another vehicle. For the first time in his humble career he is the center of attention — but alas! unconscious of his brief glory. When he awakes in a jungle of pain, he is in a hospital, the object of much medical tinkering. It is a long siege, but he survives to carry the marks of the mishap. The debts which have accumulated at home, and the stack of doctors' and hospital bills, must await the return of his earning capacity. But at least Elmer is now well enough to consider taking the matter to law. He has thought about it while flat on his back and it seemed a simple enough procedure, especially since there were any number of kind lawyers willing, nay eager, to help.

What followed may be termed the legal education of Mr. Prindle, God bless him.

Elmer admits with a smile that

he knows nothing about law, and he is not exaggerating. Even for those who have a speaking acquaintance with litigation, it is a maze of fantastic rules and tricky detours. The seasoned practitioner himself stumbles into pitfalls on its tortuous paths — at the client's expense, usually. What except bewilderment, therefore, can be the fate of our Elmer? Nevertheless, he is warned at every turn that "ignorance of the law is no excuse." As he is led from one mysterious bypath into another in that maze he begins to find out what complex procedures he faces, what financial and nervous burdens he must assume, how many spiked fences separate him from a verdict and the distance between a verdict and cold cash. Somewhere along the journey a question emerges from the long-drawn ordeal:

Is it worthwhile for this Elmer, for any Elmer, to Go to Law over a matter which may loom large in his own eyes, but which to the law itself is trifling — though not too trifling to produce legalistic tan-

gles, delays, obscurities, and prevarications?

Elmer is completely (and a little sheepishly) ignorant of the cause of the accident. The most important single event in his life, but he remembers it only as a blur of pain! At the moment it happened his mind was fixed ruefully on last night's disastrous poker, and the new disaster blotted out even that. The owners and drivers of the colliding vehicles attempt to fasten the blame upon each other, and Elmer begins to consider himself lucky that they don't try to fasten it on him. About the only facts on which there is general agreement is that there was, indeed, a collision and that Elmer was in it. These prove insufficient ground for an out-of-court adjustment, although Elmer, groggy with the burden of debt, hungers for a settlement.

From the willing horde he has selected a lawyer. In retaining John Bland he was really paying him a compliment. After all, this is the most important case in the world — to Elmer Prindle. Having placed himself under Bland's guidance, he knows that he is on his way to enforce his rights and recover damages.

The search for witnesses begins. After much effort a few are discov-

ered, but they evince a curious reluctance about coming to the aid of the battered citizen. In several instances it is apparent that other parties to the accident have approached the witnesses already and deftly slanted the direction of their memory. The able Mr. Bland, however, squeezes enough alleged facts from the witnesses to justify bringing suit. The legal formalities thereupon swing into play. Process is issued and the hunt is begun to serve the defendants, who have run discreetly to cover to postpone the evil day. In the end they are tracked down and served. Formal denials are hurled back at our Elmer. Negligence is denied and the burden of proving such negligence is placed on the victim of the accident.

Elmer follows the ramifications of the legal procedures and grows dizzier as they unwind with the tantalizing deliberateness of a slow-motion film. Motions in court are directed to the matters alleged in pleadings. Bills of particulars are furnished. Examinations before trial are held to discover unknown facts. Commissions are issued to collect the testimony of witnesses now residing in other States. An appeal is taken from preliminary court orders, first by one side then by the other, with attendant ex-

pense. Physicians' reports, X-ray pictures, laboratory analyses, and other medical data are compiled. Photographs and diagrams of the scene of the mishap, costly and difficult, are prepared. One after another every available witness is interrogated and a signed statement is obtained, if possible. These records will be indispensable, since the persons involved will have forgotten the little they still think they remember by the time the case comes to trial. Time is consumed at every step — time and money and the dwindling residue of Elmer Prindle's patience and peace of mind.

Finally the action is placed on the court calendar. The defendants, those from whom Elmer seeks to collect compensation, turn out to be great believers in the jury system, if only because a case on the jury slate (in New York County, let us say) cannot be reached for nearly two years. Anyhow, the defendants refuse to waive their constitutional right to a trial by jury.

For some two years, therefore, the action slumbers on the calendar, nearly forgotten by everybody but Elmer. He, too, might forget it if not for the reminders of bill collectors. The great hour is fixed and draws near. Witnesses must be

served with subpoenas, if they can be found. It develops that a few of them have died and one has moved to Europe. Because the testimony of certain missing witnesses is crucial to the case, an adjournment is obtained. After additional delay and expense, they are located, and Elmer reaches zero hour.

The jury is selected and the trial gathers steam. Witnesses are examined and cross-examined. As the story of the accident unfolds from the witness chair, it becomes more confused, more contradictory, than an international diplomatic conference. Two sets of experts, equally reputable and well-paid for their services, give divergent interpretations of what precisely happened to Mr. Prindle's limbs and nerves in that distant day when the two vehicles collided. Elmer, listening to their technical debate, feels vaguely that they have not touched the heart of the matter: his long agony, the dismay of his loved ones at home, the dislocation of his placid life and the nightmares about collisions that remain as a hangover of the disaster. At long last the opposing counsel make their summations, and their talk seems to Elmer full of elaborate irrelevancies. The court instructs the jury, which retires with Elmer's fate in its hands.

The proceedings have lasted four days. Elmer is lucky that a mistrial is not ordered. Oblique reference was made somewhere along the line to the circumstance that one or both of the defendants are insured against liability, and their counsel demands that the whole thing be called off on this ground. There is also a claim of "incurable" misconduct by counsel during the trial. But the court has found sufficient ground for instructing the twelve good men and true to disregard the breaches of legal etiquette, and the trial stands.

Then, after the years of waiting, the long worry and long bills, Elmer gets a verdict. Victory! The plaintiff is awarded \$5000. Elmer's face is wreathed in smiles. Five grand sounds like a fortune. He thanks Mr. Bland and Mr. Bland's assistants and tries to signal gratitude in the grin he exposes to the twelve jurors and the judge.

II

His self-congratulation does not last long. Opposing counsel evidently do not accept the verdict as seriously as the plaintiff. They poll the jury to determine whether the verdict was arrived at by casting lots and not as the result of deliberation — such verdicts are not ap-

proved by most courts and may be set aside. It may also develop that the jurors may have decided in advance to abide by the decision of the majority — another catch that may vitiate the verdict. It may also be disclosed that one of the mighty twelve secretly visited the scene of the accident and reported findings to his fellow jurors. Though his report may contribute exactly nothing to the sum-total of evidence, it is heinous misconduct and sufficient to void the verdict. The court itself has the right to set aside the jury's decision if he considers it contrary to the evidence or the law.

Having negotiated these unexpected hurdles, Elmer discovers that the five thousand bucks are still out of his reach. As per custom, the court grants the defendants a stay of execution for thirty and sixty days in which to perfect an appeal. Meanwhile payment is postponed. Quietly and studiously, Elmer's able enemies study the record, find flaws and loopholes aplenty, and serve notice that an appeal will be taken. Mr. Bland imparts this sad news to his client. Elmer's joy, having simmered down to bewilderment, now turns to gloom. He is made to understand that the Bland organization must now in turn study the record and prepare

briefs and wait once more for decisions from on high.

And so the law moves on ponderously, and months stretch into years. Elmer has now trudged in the maze for nearly four weary years. Being among the luckier litigants, the verdict for the plaintiff is finally affirmed, the damages are paid, and the curtain is rung down on a trifling affair involving one Elmer Prindle, a meek and law-abiding American who had the ill grace to be mixed up with two colliding vehicles.

As Mr. Bland has explained, Elmer should consider himself fortunate that the defendants were insured to the \$5000 point, and responsible financially. Had their insurance been limited to a smaller figure and had they been without other assets, the solidest verdict within the gift of the law courts would have done him no good. Mr. Prindle's \$5000 are allocated as follows:

Lawyers' fees	\$1666
Loss of wages	1000
To the doctors	750
To the hospital	250
Other expenses of illness.....	100
Expenses of litigation.....	234
	\$4000
<i>Balance to victim.....</i>	<i>\$1000</i>

Such is the high cost of lawing — to the litigants to say nothing of what it is to the taxpayers. The entire machinery of justice has been in motion for years, even if slow motion, with results altogether out of proportion to the effort and investment. The facts in dispute could, most likely, have been ascertained more quickly and more fairly by a group of disinterested experts, somewhat in the manner of procedure in workmen's compensation cases.

All this Elmer — his ultimate "satisfaction" nine-tenths chagrin and one-tenth cash — senses in the meek, mixed-up way that is natural to his kind.



THE PAINT AND POWDER RACKET

BY LOIS MATTOX MILLER

ACCORDING to the advertisers' testament of our super-colossal age, if a woman is not beautiful and alluring it's just her own fault. If her skin isn't as the rose petal, if her hands have not the softness of an angel's caress, if her lips aren't luscious, if her eyes don't shine, it's simply because she hasn't been reading the right advertising, or buying the right brands of paint, powder, perfume, lotion, lipstick, or skin food.

In answer to this propaganda, the women of America have helped cosmetic manufacturers transform a feminine vanity that is older than Cleopatra into a great modern industry. They put \$400,000,000 worth of cosmetics on their faces last year — thereby benefiting their souls, it is to be feared, rather more than their skins. They bought a staggering tonnage of promises, few of which could ever be kept: 52,000 tons of cleansing cream, 27,000 tons of skin lotion, 20,000 tons of complexion soap, 18,000 tons of "nourishing" cream, 2500 tons of rouge. Add to that the im-

measurable amount of massaging, baking, freezing, scraping, and muscle-molding that was applied in the name of beauty and one begins to understand why an outstanding dermatologist said that "the American woman treats her skin as if it were a doormat."

In order to discover facts about this cosmetic comedy which every woman should know, the author consulted prominent skin specialists recommended by the Medical Society of the State of New York, studied cosmetic advertising and promotion, and had a representative number of widely-used preparations subjected to laboratory tests. The results show that quality is often identical where price is not, and that the advertisers' version of skin health and beauty bears as much relation to physiological facts as the green-cheese fable does to lunar astronomy.

The dermatologists are, unanimously, not amused by the cosmetic comedy. They consider most cosmetics physically harmless, but extravagantly overpriced and —

with some such exceptions as lip-stick, rouge, and face powder — entirely incapable of the miracles claimed for them. They object strenuously to the popular misconceptions about the health and hygiene of the skin which are created and spread by the imagination of sales promotion experts — for instance, the deliberate fiction that the feminine skin (particularly on the neck, face, and hands) is a delicate tissue which must be oiled and fed regularly with “scientific” preparations if it is to remain youthful and attractive. “Tommyrot,” answer the dermatologists: your skin is waterproof, tough, resistant, and able to withstand an extraordinary amount of punishment. And Dr. Lloyd Arnold of the University of Illinois has established, in a striking series of experiments, that a clean skin — i.e., washed with ordinary soap and water — is one of the most remarkable self-disinfecting agents ever known. He placed thousands of bacteria on the freshly bathed unbroken skin of one of his laboratory assistants and then watched the skin rid itself of them in a very few minutes.

Contrary to the ads, your skin won't take nourishment. It is non-absorptive. Like bones, muscles, and internal organs, it can be fed

only from within; its appearance, sallow or glowing, reflects the individual's internal health. And the dermatologists brand as useless the hundreds of creams or lotions which purport to feed vitamins or other “valuable” substances into the skin and its underlying tissues. The entire school of advertising which has convinced American women that such skin feeding or wrinkle-removing is possible is labeled by dermatologists as fictional or fraudulent.

Dr. Howard Fox, Professor Emeritus of Dermatology of the New York University School of Medicine, maintains that cosmetic manufacturers have erected a fiction worth millions upon the little word “pore.” Countless women have been led to buy “astringents” in the belief that the pores “open and shut like the mouth of a fish.” Which, of course, isn't true: “the pores cannot be closed by any method of treatment.” Of “muscle oils” and “wrinkle removers” Dr. Fox says:

You are given to understand that you can oil up the voluntary muscles of the skin as if you had a tiny oil can. Needless to say, no preparation applied to the skin has any effect on the muscles of the skin. Nor will any cream do away with wrinkles, which are caused by disappearance of the subcutaneous fat and a lessening of the tension of the skin.

Thus, in the opinion of dermatologists, the millions of dollars spent every year on high-priced skin "foods," "nourishing" creams, and, to a large extent, astringents, are just so much money thrown away.

II

But does this mean that the doctors wish to sweep the American woman's dressing table clear and throw away her make-up kit entirely? By no means! The medical profession, like everyone else, recognizes an "aesthetic" side to cosmetics; and even those doctors who staunchly advocate plain soap and water for a healthy skin concede that they would not care to see the female members of their families going around with shiny noses and freshly scrubbed cheeks.

Though millions may be wasted on some, cosmetics are undeniably as essential to a well dressed woman as her silly hats and her high heeled shoes — modern fashion being what it is. She may not get the health of skin she paid for, but from the adroit use of rouge, powder, and lipstick in accenting or improving features or skin, she gets peace of mind, and a "lift" when she looks in the mirror. So the dermatologists, while praising plain soap and water, gladly accord

to woman these adornments, and even the simple creams which can help a dry, chapped, or roughened skin and have some value as make-up removers — although their value as a cleansing agent, independent of a soap and water washing, is doubtful.

But, they add, she is being terribly overcharged for some basically-very-simple compounds.

This is borne out by the tests made for this article. Cosmetics in general use all over the country were purchased from representative five-and-ten, drug, and department stores, as well as from a few beauty salons. These typical samples were carefully examined and analyzed, for physical and chemical characteristics, by a well known research laboratory in New York. The findings have a practical bearing not only upon beauty and health but on pocketbooks, and show how little relation there usually is between the quality of cosmetics and their price.

The chief item in a woman's beauty kit is face powder. Here the tests showed small agreement between price and performance. Good face powder should be easy to spread; it should adhere well, a little of it should cover a wide area, and it should not readily absorb moisture. A medium-priced brand,

at 47¢ an ounce, was the best. The most expensive, purchased in a beauty salon, was not as good, though it cost 61¢ an ounce. In one respect, it was worse; it contained starch which caused it to absorb moisture and become lumpy. Besides, certain rare individuals are allergic to starch.

There was little to choose between brand B at 18¢ and brand C at 61¢. Four well-known brands of liquefying (cleansing) cream turned out to be physically and chemically almost identical. Except for the difference in perfume, they might all have come from the same batch. Possibly they did; manufacturers of paraffin and petrolatum blends turn the basic cream out by the ton, ready for perfuming and packaging under any brand.

It is doubtful whether any of them would show a performance record better than another's; their effect is largely mechanical, anyway — they lubricate the dirt. Yet they ranged in price from 15¢ to 58¢ an ounce.

Tests of lipsticks were for melting point (which should not be too far above body temperature); for ease of removal with dry cloth and with soap and water, permanency of fabric stain after boiling in soap and water, and smoothness and uniformity of streak under micro-

scope. Of the four lipsticks tested, brand B, at \$1.39 an ounce, performed quite as well as brand C, at \$7.06. Brand D (from a beauty salon) performed as poorly as brand A (from the five-and-ten) though it cost ten times as much. Here again, price was no measure of quality.

The astringents, or "skin tonics," tested consisted of plain water and alcohol. Still their wide use seemed to warrant analysis, if only to show the consumer how much she is paying for simple ingredients of doubtful value. Their effect on the skin is exhilarating, but temporary — dermatologists say that the same bracing effect that one feels after an "astringent" can be produced by a splash of plain cold water from the bathroom faucet. One of the four brands tested contained a trifling amount of zinc salt — and so perhaps best deserves the name. Three had a little glycerine; one had none. All of them had about 23 per cent alcohol; all were substantially the same except for color and odor. Nothing shown by the tests warranted a spread in price from 6¢ to 26¢ per ounce.

From these tests women can learn what is already well known to skin specialists and the cosmetic trade. The similarity of brands in everything but price suggests that they

all come out of the same barrel, which is often actually the case. Most cosmetics, despite competitive claims, are compounded according to more or less standardized formulae available to every manufacturer, or indeed to anyone who wants to enter the lucrative cosmetic game. Many prominent cosmetic firms do not have even a single chemist in their employ. A surprising number of "manufacturers" do no manufacturing at all, but have their products made up by a manufacturing chemist. In the course of this investigation, one manufacturer was found packaging for the dime store trade, under one label, the identical cream he was putting up for a Fifth Avenue salon to retail, under its own label, in slightly larger and more elaborate jars, at \$6 a jar!

This latter anomaly, however, may pass into oblivion when the new Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act becomes effective on the twenty-fifth of June. Under this law, a cosmetic not manufactured by the firm whose name appears on the label must add some such phrase as "manufactured by ——" and "distributed by ——".

In the opinion of many doctors and informed laymen, this new law leaves much to be desired, but at least it does away with one more

abuse of the public trust by the cosmetics trade. All future labels must state clearly and prominently the volume or weight in ounces of the packages' net contents.

The law also aims to put an end to the false-bottomed boxes and "big" jars which have been a favorite device of the manufacturers for years. With simple raw materials from a common source, it is obvious that the "new discovery" and the "secret ingredient" must be set down as strictly ballyhoo.

III

But cosmetics have one ingredient which no tests can analyze. Call it hope. Beauty is partly a matter of feeling beautiful. Elegant jars and high prices can contribute to this feeling. Even promises not believed in are sometimes better than none. Though chemically and economically it might make sense, what woman would get a "lift" from going to the corner store and having her cosmetics dished out to her with a scoop, like lard?

The intelligent woman, however, will not pay too high a price for hope. She will realize that the cosmetician's claims are still too lofty to be a reliable buying

guide, that there are no "secrets" or "magic" in his homely art. Knowing that the best bargains seldom come in expensive fancy packages, she will have a fair chance of touching up Nature's handiwork successfully and at not too great a cost. And in approaching the cosmetic counter she will remember what another advertiser (of tobacco) said with some success a few years ago, "It's fun to be fooled — but it's more fun to know!"



BRIEF READING FOR LONG THINKING

Timely Warning

An enemy is a very dangerous fellow from two points of view. He may do disastrous things to us, but he may also persuade us to do disastrous things to ourselves. We do not want to turn ourselves into a herd state in order to be prepared to deal with other herd states. — DOROTHY THOMPSON, in "On The Record" in the New York *Herald Tribune*.

Fascism Summed Up

As for those who fail to understand to the end and hereafter persist in the opposition to Japan, we have no other alternative but to exterminate them. — PREMIER HIRANUMA, in speech to Japanese Parliament.

Definition

The soi-disant Liberals of today are the people who feel that if they adopt the identical measures and methods used by Stalin, Hitler, and Mussolini, the results must be entirely different because of the excellence of their intentions. . . . And it is no use telling the perpetual-motion genius that his machine, whatever it may be, will not work because of friction and the law of the conservation of energy. . . . He will only reply happily that in *his* machine friction is eliminated. — Isabel Paterson in the New York *Herald Tribune*.

HANDS OFF JAPAN!

BY WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

IN a previous issue of THE AMERICAN MERCURY, Major George Fielding Eliot demonstrated that, from the military and naval standpoint, a conflict between Japan and America is one of the least feasible of wars. Both Japan and America would face immense, perhaps insuperable, difficulties in getting close enough to the other's shores to strike a decisive blow. A Japanese large-scale naval expedition against America, faced by a fleet superior in size and striking power, and enjoying the advantage of proximity to its home bases, would almost certainly go down with the Spanish Armada as one of the lost navies of history. An American naval offensive against Japan might meet no better fate, and would certainly be enormously costly and difficult.

That, unhappily, does not dispose of the matter. Wars are not always based on a cool calculation of strategic realities. One of the world's greatest captains, Napoleon, lost 500,000 men and undermined the towering superstruc-

ture of his European empire by venturing on a campaign into the heart of Russia which, in retrospect, seems a monument of political and military folly. A head-on collision between Japan and America is certainly psychologically not excluded, however little promise of swift or easy victory it offers to either side. Moreover, many Americans who are consciously or unconsciously working for war with Japan do not face up to the implications of the policies which they advocate. They urge one-sided economic sanctions, reinforced, perhaps, by a "peaceful" long-range naval blockade, without recognizing that these measures, if they proved effective, would provoke retaliation and war.

At the present time, I think, it is only in America that one must look for the danger of an American-Japanese clash. Japan has assumed in China a prodigious task, to which its strength may or may not prove equal. The Soviet Union hangs as a menacing threat on the right flank of its forward thrust in

Asia. The wildest Japanese militarist or navalist, under such circumstances, would not think of provoking a war with America. Indeed, a noteworthy feature of Japanese war journalism has been the clearly inspired playing down of American antipathy to Japan; the avoidance, in the Japanese press—usually so quick to take up the cudgels with foreign critics—of hostile references to America. Japan's destiny lies in Asia, not in the American hemisphere. Any war between Japan and America, whatever the immediate provocation, will be the result of a conscious or unconscious determination on America's part to intervene in Asia, as it intervened in Europe in 1917. And the issue of any such war will be fought out in Asiatic waters.

Is such intervention probable? It is instructive, in this connection, to compare America's attitude toward the Sino-Japanese war of 1937-38 with the American position during the years of neutrality in the World War, from 1914 until 1917. There are striking similarities, as well as significant contrasts.

As regards emotional sympathy, America is more anti-Japanese today than it was anti-German in the first years of the World War. Probably not one American in a

hundred is sympathetic with Japan's cause. There is no Japanese minority in America capable of exerting the influence of the German-Americans, reinforced, as they were, by predominantly anti-British Irish-Americans. On the other hand, there is less direct sympathy with China than there was with England and France in the World War, because no Americans reckon Chinese among their ancestors and comparatively few cherish close social contacts with China.

Strong traces of the Wilson-House inheritance can be seen in the moralistic speeches of Roosevelt and Hull. There was a time, in the Nineteenth Century, when American policy was directed to the purpose of keeping foreign aggressors out of America. This policy worked pretty well, too; the only serious war in which America became involved was the four-year struggle between the States. Today, despite the highly disenchanting results of the Wilsonian crusade for democracy, the idea seems to be gaining ground in influential quarters that America must be drawn into any major quarrel that may arise anywhere in the globe.

Roosevelt's suggestion for quarantining aggressor nations, Hull's emphasis on the necessity for up-

holding "orderly processes in international relations" (a commendable ideal, doubtless, but one that has never been realized over any considerable period of history) are omens to be watched. They correspond with similar steps in the evolution of Wilson and House from neutrality to partisanship.

There are also some obvious parallels in the field of foreign propaganda. The generally pro-Chinese or anti-Japanese state of American public opinion makes it easy for such propaganda to make its way, just as predominantly pro-Ally sentiment in 1914-1917 smoothed the way for any British or French lecturer or writer.

II

In the present case it is not only China that is interested in embroiling America with Japan. Japan's advance on the continent of Asia is a political threat to the Soviet Union and an economic threat to Great Britain, the country with the largest investment stake in China. What started as a war between Japan and China may end as a gigantic struggle between Japan and the Soviet Union for the mastery of East Asia. So it is not surprising that every Communist-dominated organization in America

should be working overtime to promote an American-Japanese breach. Despite their clownish efforts to don the togas of Washington and Lincoln, the American comrades think solely of Soviet, not of American interests in foreign policy. So Earl Browder, Stalin's Number One yes-man in America, published in the *New Republic* an article dedicated to the patently ridiculous proposition that Japan was more likely to invade America than to clash with the Soviet Union. And Comrade Troyanovsky, one of the very few prominent Soviet diplomats who—at least at this writing—have escaped execution or imprisonment in the current purges, has strained the limits of diplomatic propriety by lecturing America on the desirability of an alliance with the Soviet Union—in the blessed name of collective security.

Great Britain is another power which is keenly interested in pushing America into the Far Eastern front-line trenches. During the weeks immediately after the sinking of the *Panay* there was a flood of more or less discreet suggestions from London for Anglo-American joint action in China. Winston Churchill generously assured America of British aid, moral and material, if it should become in-

volved in the Far Eastern conflict. Just what form this aid would assume, in view of Great Britain's heavy preoccupations in Europe, he did not specify. He added, however, in accents strongly reminiscent of 1917, that by taking a strong stand the United States would not only safeguard its own security and liberty, but would help preserve the peace and civilization of the West. He virtuously repudiated the idea that American intervention would be on behalf of Great Britain and maintained that such action would involve "primarily the future safety and liberty of the American people." One fancies, however, that Mr. Churchill was not oblivious of the fact that such action would considerably minister to the future safety of Hong Kong and Singapore.

In the week after the sinking of the *Panay* the British Admiral, C. V. Usborne, at a private meeting of members of Parliament, proposed the creation of a "Joint Naval Advisory Council on Far Eastern Affairs" by Great Britain, the United States, and France. Members of all parties, according to the Associated Press report of the meeting urged "a patrol of Chinese waters by combined fleets of American, British, and French warships." The Admiral, whose

naval qualities may not have included a sense of humor, declared that his plan would be "absolutely non-aggressive."

Visible British pressure for American action in the Far East subsided after the retirement of Eden as Foreign Secretary, which had its repercussions on British policy in the Far East as well as in Europe. After the Munich capitulation Britain can scarcely ask others to act with a straight face. The British attitude on Far Eastern questions, moreover, is more subtle and complicated than the Soviet. Stalin's objective, which he pursues with equal perseverance through the Soviet diplomatic missions abroad and through his obedient "second Foreign Office," the Communist International, is transparently clear. It is to deepen and aggravate the differences between the democratic countries, on one side, and Germany, Italy, and Japan on the other, in the hope that ultimately a new world war will start, with the same devastating effects as the last one on material well-being and social stability.

Great Britain has no such clear and simple policy. The British, especially those who are concerned with the conduct of foreign affairs, are less apt than Americans to be sentimental about China. The

memory of the anti-British riots, strikes, and boycotts of the years 1924-1927, when the Kuomintang, the Chinese nationalist party, was in close alliance with the Chinese communists, is still fairly fresh. While Japan looms up as the immediate threat to British interests, there are no illusions among British residents of the Far East as to the clean sweep of foreign rights and interests which would follow a complete Chinese victory. British policy is therefore complex and a trifle blurred, never losing sight of the possibility of an ultimate agreement with Japan, but also on the hopeful lookout for allies if the Island Empire proves intractable.

On the whole the propaganda pull to draw America into the Far Eastern hostilities is roughly comparable with the similar effort to induce participation in the World War, especially if one considers the vast amount of Soviet-inspired effort which goes on under the alluring labels of "anti-war" and "anti-fascism." On the economic side, on the other hand, the baits for American belligerency are not so large and tempting as they were before 1917. There are no American loans to China to finance huge war orders. China and Japan alike are obliged to fight the war on a shoestring. Both have little cash

and less credit. So America's economy is not geared to the victory of one side, as it was in 1917.

Whatever varied forces may be influential in drawing a country into war, there must always be some "last straw," some overt incident which can be exploited in fanning popular bellicosity to the necessary temperature. It is a matter of speculation whether America would have entered the World War if it had not been for the German decision to carry on unlimited submarine warfare. This placed America before the alternatives of fighting or of abandoning a profitable war trade. And a host of considerations, material and sentimental, promoted the decision to fight.

There is little prospect that a similar situation will arise in the Far East. It has been annoying for Japan, with its mastery of the sea, to witness the inflow of foreign munitions through Hong Kong and Canton. But the Japanese Government has adhered to the view that this inflow was a lesser evil than a clash with foreign powers over freedom of navigation.

On the other hand, the danger of unforeseen "incidents" in the course of the present undeclared hostilities is greater than it would be in the case of a regular declared

war. Americans are scattered all over China. American gunboats assert the right to remain on the Yangtze in zones of military activity. The use of the airplane considerably increases the risk to non-combatants who may be within bombing range. While cases of death and injury to Americans have been surprisingly few, there is always the risk of some incident which can be built up to formidable proportions because of the anti-Japanese feeling in America.

Notwithstanding the practical military and naval objections to a war between America and Japan, the political risk of such a conflict thus cannot be dismissed as negligible. We should not underestimate the explosive possibilities of the following combination of factors: a self-righteous foreign policy with a crusading tinge; widespread popular dislike of Japan; foreign propaganda aiming at aggravation of American-Japanese relations and the ever-present possibility of accidents to American lives and property in the war area.

III

Is there any justification for such a war, any real national interest which it would serve? The time may come when the raising of

such questions will incur a stiff prison sentence in Fort Leavenworth or some other bastille. In the present security of peace I should answer both questions emphatically in the negative. One can safely predict that any such war, even if it should end in complete American victory, would raise more problems than it would solve. It would fail to realize any of its professed objectives and would represent a complete net loss as regards the lives which would be sacrificed and the money which would be spent. The effort to impose American morality on Asia with the aid of battleships and aircraft-carriers would be as dismal a fiasco as the effort twenty years ago to impose Mr. Wilson's morality on Europe.

Advocates of war and of war-making sanctions employ two sets of arguments, material and moral. On the material side it is argued that America's economy will be prostrated if access to "the vast Chinese market" is denied, that American property and investments in China are in dire peril and can only be saved by some forceful action against Japan. It is most amusing to see avowed Communists and their miscellaneous allies suddenly seized with acute concern for the safety of the

profits of American business firms in China.

But when one looks up the cold facts and figures it is evident that this vast Chinese market, like the unlimited Soviet market which was supposed to produce hundreds of millions of dollars worth of orders for American goods after recognition, is a compound of myth and ballyhoo. Soviet Russia is a less profitable customer than Czarist Russia. And in 1936, an unusually prosperous year for China, American sales to that country reached the figure of \$46,819,000. This was a little over 1.5 per cent of the total value of America's export trade. In the same year America's sales to Japan amounted to \$204,312,000, over four times the value of the exports to China. So the economics of fighting to preserve trade with China, even proceeding on the unjustified assumption that this trade would be lost by a Japanese victory, are hardly convincing.

What is more, the cost of a war is grotesquely out of proportion to the American economic stake in China. America spent over \$25,000,000,000 during the World War. At the most moderate estimate a war with Japan could scarcely be had for less than \$5,000,000,000. The mere interest on this sum, at 5 per cent, would exceed by

several times the value of America's annual sales to China. One year's interest would outweigh the whole estimated value of America's investments in China (about \$200,000,000).

There is no likelihood, incidentally, that American trade and investments in China will be wiped out if the present struggle ends in the establishment of Japanese control over considerable parts of China. Some American exports to China — oil, tobacco, and cotton, for instance — are non-competitive so far as Japan is concerned, since Japan is herself short of these commodities. Physical damage to American property in China has not been heavy. In several cases compensation has been paid when direct proof of Japanese responsibility for damage and destruction has been presented through diplomatic channels.

Intangible as well as tangible reasons are often advanced for a hostile American stand vis-à-vis Japan. The bogey is raised that China is just an *hors d'œuvre* for Japan, which is aiming at the conquest of the whole world. The necessity of maintaining prestige is alleged. The mystical obligations of collective security are invoked. In this matter of Japan as a future world conqueror the leading anti-

Japanese crusaders show a tendency to get their signals mixed. Sometimes they take the line that the Island Empire's economic structure is so weak that it will certainly crumble if only enough Americans will join in the chant: "If we use cotton Japan gets not-ton." Then they fly to the other extreme of depicting Japan as a sinister colossus, destined to bestride the whole world if other powers do not form a China military and economic aid society.

Now Japan's real strength is about midway between these fanciful estimates. Its leaders did not let their country in for the struggle in China without carefully weighing both the diplomatic and the economic factors involved. Weak sanctions (such as voluntary boycotts) Japan can disregard for an indefinite period of time. Strong sanctions, such as a concerted withholding of oil and other essential war materials, enforced by some kind of naval blockade, would provoke desperate reprisals — swift Japanese naval strokes at the lands in Southeastern Asia which are rich in oil, tin, rubber, iron, and other materials, including the Philippines, the Netherlands Indies, and Malaya.

At the same time there are cogent reasons, geographical, po-

litical, and economic, why Japan's territorial ambitions must be limited to East Asia. The task of developing such parts of China as may remain under Japanese influence after the end of hostilities, the necessity for keeping watch on the Soviet Union, constitute most effective insurance against any Japanese expansion toward the Americas. Moreover, despite Japan's amazing progress during the last seventy years, it is distinctly inferior to America and to the leading countries of Western Europe both in natural resources and in industrial technique. Japan's general cultural and material level, which varies sharply in different fields, averages somewhere between the rest of Asia and the more advanced Western countries. This marks out Asia as the sphere of Japan's efforts as conqueror, colonizer, and trader.

IV

It is not easy to see how American prestige is involved in the present war. America has no obligation to maintain existing frontiers in Asia. Americans in China have fared better, not worse than is the usual rule for foreigners who reside in a country which has become a theatre of hostilities.

One wonders whether our advocates of collective security—with its implied obligation for America to go to war, if necessary, to check aggression in every part of the world—have ever reconstructed American history as it would have been written if this obligation had been accepted in the last century. We should have had very little peace. The same logic that would have made America fight to preserve the opium-smoking Chang Hsueh-liang in power in Manchuria and the raw-meat-eating *rases* of Abyssinia would have pushed us into repeated conflicts with the leading expansionist powers of the last century, Great Britain and France, on behalf of oppressed and down-trodden Chinese, Indians, Moroccans, Zulus, Annamites, and other tribes too numerous to mention. No people in its right mind would assume such an obligation.

The dream of freezing frontiers is not new. The Holy Alliance undertook to guaranty the boundaries of post-Napoleonic Europe and also to stop internal revolutionary change. The attempt failed, just as the efforts to establish a permanent *status quo* for Europe at Versailles and for East Asia at Washington broke down, for much the same reasons. It is

equally impossible to eliminate the inequalities of national wealth which are a potent source of international friction or to do away with the inequality of military and industrial strength which has always tempted strong powers to help themselves at the expense of the weak. Nor can we arrest the workings of those mysterious laws by which some nations advance at specific times and others decline.

It is quite foreign to my intention to justify or to euphemize the career of conquest on which Japan has embarked on the Asiatic mainland. Such ventures defy apologetics. If they succeed they are gradually accepted as part of the normal order of things. If they fail they bring swift retribution. While I do not agree with those optimistic friends of China who regard Japan as already beaten I am by no means convinced that Japan is sure to win, in the long run. The omens seem to point to a long and stern struggle in which the economic endurance of the two countries will play a considerable part in determining the result. It may be that Japan has appeared too late on the imperialist stage, that China's sense of nationality, late as it has been in awakening, will prove a fatal stumbling-block to Japanese schemes of control.

But there is one consideration which, it seems to me, should be decisive as to American non-participation in the Far Eastern conflict. This is that American intervention, while it might benefit Chinese nationalists, Soviet communists, or the British Empire, would serve no rationally conceived American interest. The only wars which are unqualifiedly endorsed in retrospect (except by absolute pacifists) are those which were waged in clear national self-defense. Successful campaigns for self usually win the open approbation of the cynical and the reluctant head-shaking acceptance of the more thin-skinned. The kind of war that is certain to be lost is a crusade for an abstract idea. Wars may be indispensable means of self-defense or useful instruments of conquest. What they can never do is to realize some scheme of higher morality, because war, by its very nature, is the negation of all morality. It should have been clear to the least observant that, whatever else the World War might achieve, it would not lead to the triumph of democracy, although only its aftermath exhibited the full ironical force of the victory of democracy's antitheses, communism and fascism.

Now no issue of American self-defense can arise in an American-Japanese war. The Western frontier of America is in Alaska and Hawaii, not in Shanghai or Hankow. As has been shown, America has no economic stake in China remotely commensurate with the expense of a war. Such a conflict, if it comes to pass, will arise out of some essentially trivial war accident, magnified out of all proportion by inflamed national feeling and exploited for the purpose of repeating in the Far East the experiment of 1917-18 in Europe.

The results, one can safely predict, will be very different from those which the promoters of the war hoped to achieve. America's most probable reward for pitting its strength against Japan's will be the emergence in China of a radical nationalist or semi-communist regime in China which will make a clean sweep of American interests there.

After a long and expensive process of education the American public will reach the conclusion that East Asia is not worth the bones of another American soldier or sailor. And about 1950 someone will write an ironical book entitled: *The Road to War, 1937-*.

VULGAR VITTLES

By DELLA T. LUTES

MY FATHER liked *plain* vittles. Flimsy stuff such as Floating Island and Apple Drift he called tarnation fool fiddle-faddle and said it was an insult to a man's teeth. My father was, like all his kin and kind who were shaping the early and promising land in Southern Michigan, rough-hewn. His cow-hide boots reeked of the barn, his overalls were laid with dust from the plowed field and pollen from the grain, and his shirt was often wet with sweat. Nevertheless he was a connoisseur of food — the kind of food, that is, on which men of his time thrived and prospered: Vulgar Vittles.

Plain, my father's food certainly was. Plain and simple and homely. But it was lusty food and it was *good*. Good in original quality and in cooking, and especially in seasoning. My father knew almost to a grain the amount of pepper that made my mother's parsnip stew different from Mis' Si Covell's unpalatable mess. He knew to a powdered leaf the amount of sage that would give the stuffing for

roast pig a flavor to permeate, but never dominate, the flesh. He knew when cream was skimmed from lobbered milk at just the stage that would make perfect butter. He knew when butter was "worked" to that point when it would be neither salvy nor grained. And he liked to spread this butter, fresh, sweet, considerably salted and properly sequacious, on newly-baked bread.

He spread deliberately: along one warm, thin-crust ed edge up and down, through the firm, sweet-velvet center and to the other crusty edge. One slice for him; one for me. Not laid on any plate, not cut into any piffling, pre-ordained mouthfuls, but whole and complete as it came from the loaf, lush and luscious, tantalizing to the tongue; mouthfuls left to individual judgment and capacity. . . . But bread and butter were only part of my father's feast. There were other vulgar vittles.

My father pulled the emerald pipes from the scallion bed, unsheathed their earth-bleached feet,

soused them in a pail of water, and laid them out, a beryled row of beauty ready for amalgamation with the staff of life, bread and butter. And onions. *Onions!* Vulgar vittles indeed! To the *haut monde*,

An onion in the garden trim
A vulgar onion is to him
And it is nothing more.

But the onion was favored by my father's kind. Fried, for example — fried in bacon fat and butter, or in the good hot leavings from sweet salt pork, and coating a tender beefsteak in a savory envelope of coppered brown.

My father made his own kraut, to go with his salt pork (thinly sliced, freshened, dipped in egg and flour, and fried in its own fat). He set an old draw knife, relic of his carpentering days, in a thick slab of wood, laid it over a barrel, and shaved the cabbage on it. The kraut barrel sat in the first cellar near the door; a wise precaution, for it certainly smelled to heaven when the lid was off. Sauerkraut and pigs feet were cooked together — the young, malleable feet of a porker not yet hog. The kraut is boiled, and the accompanying sector of flesh is fried, as the onions are, in fat of pork in an iron skillet or shallow kittle devised for perfect cookery of this kind. (Kittles, skillets, spiders, and dripping pans

were important factors in the correct manipulation of vulgar vittles.)

My father never looked upon the homely cabbage as other than a tasty and a filling food. He had never heard of vitamins — our family was not, in fact, made especially conscious of food that was "good for us." We ate what we liked and what was set before us, and took sulphur and molasses in the spring to counteract any ill-effects of winter diet. If anybody had told us that the cabbage was so highly regarded by the Egyptians for its medicinal value that they built an altar to it, we would have hooted in derision.

But, hallowed or not, cabbage was in one form or another a frequent contributor to our humble fare. We fried it in bacon or salt-pork fat; and if you can find anything better than salt-pork fat for frying raw potatoes, onions, cabbage, kraut, parsnips, or corn-meal mush — why, let me know. (But don't dry to palm off any substitutes for frying on me. These arguments against fried foods only hold good because most people don't know how to fry. Mis' Covell, for example, soaked things in fat; her fried raw potatoes reeked of grease.) My mother fried potatoes (raw, crisp slices) in either butter and bacon fat, or salt-pork fat and but-

ter. When they were done each separate slice was browned on both sides, but no grease adhered. My mother said when you fry food in fat, you use the fat merely to *coat* the outside; you don't want to soak in it.

So we ate fried cabbage, and added a little vinegar to the fat to give it temper.

And stewed cabbage: simmered in a little salted water for twenty minutes or so, drained, and then moistened with hot cream and butter with a sprinkling of black pepper. But don't *swim* it in cream, and don't skimp on the butter — vulgar vittles call for butter. Probably butter itself is sort of vulgar, the way we used it, but then we *made* it.

Or boiled cabbage: cabbage boiled with corned beef and a slab of salt pork — streak-o'-fat and streak-o'-lean. And I mean *boiled*. Not just half raw the way they tell you to do it now, so it crunches, but boiled until it's done. Cabbage, potatoes, 'beggies, and a parsnip for added flavor.

And cabbage raw: I wonder if you know that the core of a fresh young cabbage, judiciously dipped in salt and *gnawed*, is a greater delicacy than any lob-lolly or polly-lop ever concocted. And infinitely better for the children.

My father liked slaw, both hot and cold, finely shaved by his kraut knife. For hot slaw we heated bacon fat in an iron kittle and poured, say, a cup of cider vinegar in it. Add a little salt, a dash of pepper, and quite a little sugar. (Don't expect me to tell you how much; if you can't tell by looking, you'll have to try tasting — if you know how it ought to taste.) Let it come to a boil and dump the cabbage in and stir it up. Push it over to the back of the stove and let it set till dinner's on the table. Thicken the vinegar very slightly with flour if you like. It takes a heap o' mixin' to make good meals, and if your vulgar vittles carry a suspicion of miscegenation, don't worry.

Cold slaw you made with the same ingredients and in the same proportion except that you didn't heat them, or you made a sour cream dressing — sour cream with an antidote of vinegar and sugar and a touch of cayenne. But you can bet your life you didn't add any foreign element to it such as shrimp — of which we had never heard — or olives or apple.

We took our apples straight, and if anybody had gone so far as to induce my father to taste an olive, he would most certainly have spit it out.

II

Pork and beans belongs right up near the head of our list of vulgar vittles. Southern Michigan was settled on pork and beans, and the settlers, the great majority of whom came from New York State, brought their way of cooking this plebeian dish with them. They did not cook Boston baked beans — there is a distinct, definite, demarcation line between the Boston bean pot and the milk pan method. Community social events in Michigan could not survive without the ubiquitous pan of beans.

A pan of such beans was versatile. Not only in its original and legitimate office as befitting any stage or station, but in the disposal of its remains. A few left-over beans whet the cook's experimental skill. For instance, take the pint or so of left-overs and spread them snugly in the bottom of a two-quart baking dish. Sprinkle over them half a cup of ketchup, red and spicy. Add a tablespoonful of sugar. Spread a generous layer of thinly sliced white onion atop and season with salt and pepper. Criss-cross over the top a few rashers of bacon; cover and put in the oven and bake three-quarters of an hour. Take the cover off and cook until the bacon is browned and slightly curled.

Or you can make bean fritters or bean cakes. For fritters, you mash the left-over beans and add half as much mashed potato or peas (supposing you had some left-over peas). Mix with the yolk of two eggs, season with salt, pepper, a grain of cayenne and a whiff of nutmeg. Mold this into small cylindrical cakes, dip in the beaten whites, roll in cracker crumbs, and fry in deep fat. To make the cakes you heat the beans, press them through a colander, add a little dry mustard, a tablespoonful of vinegar, salt, pepper, and a tablespoonful of molasses, brown sugar, or honey, and a tablespoonful of melted butter (according to the amount of beans). Turn (hot) into a square cornered mold and let cool. When cold, cut into cakes, dip in beaten egg, roll in bread crumbs, and fry in hot fat. And you sprinkle pepper-sass on both cakes and fritters when you eat them. My father would as soon have eaten onions without salt as beans without pepper-sass.

I have left the best, and with us the most common, use to which left-over beans were put to the last. This is bean soup. Save all superfluous liquid in which the beans were boiled and keep it in a cold place. When ready to make your soup, put the beans in a kettle,

add the liquid and fresh water to about twice the quantity of beans. Bring to a boil and simmer gently for half an hour or so. Not long enough to boil away. Drain the beans and press through a colander. Put them back in the liquid, season, and serve hot. If you happen to have a ham bone lying around put it in with the beans while boiling.

The milk-pan genus of baked beans is the Great American Dish. A vulgar dish appealing to the logger, the lumberjack, the dock-walloper, the landlubber, the plowman, the harvester, thresher, the American *man*. It is economical, filling, and *good*. But it has to be baked at home. No commercial bean has yet been devised (and I have been guilty of devising some myself) that will compare with either the pot-baked or the pan-baked bean. It takes a woman who likes to cook, and knows how, to bake beans — baked in small quantities and in a home oven. Then you have *beans*. Canned beans are fine; everybody ought to have some — on the emergency shelf. But also everyone — well, maybe not *everyone*, but everyone who likes vulgar vittles — should have the pleasure of eating home-baked beans of one kind or the other.

Another American institution

beloved of the horny-fisted farmer of my cherished youth was the fried-cake, a stable integer in that other corporate body indigenous to American soil once known as Breakfast. Of course this ceremony taken in its literal sense is still maintained, but hardly, as you might say, is the fast *broken*. Cracked, might be the word. When a man ate buckwheat cakes and sausage and warmed-up potatoes, topped off with two-three fried-cakes and coffee, he ate Breakfast. Especially if he dunked his fried-cakes. (I am thinking seriously of organizing a society for the recognition and reinstatement of Doughnut Dunkers which, in short, would mean the re-establishment of the human male from his demotion to the rodent state.)

Whether pie, by and large, should be included in this panegyric to vulgar vittles is a matter over which the pen must at least momentarily pause. If so, there must be relative degrees of vulgarity. Even ladies eat pie. Chiffon pies especially. Pies that add but little to the weight and nothing to the joy of living. A chiffon pie should be listed amongst the elegances and kickshaws such as Floating Island, cream puffs, prune whips, fruit salads, and similar flummeries.

The only pie which could by right of eminent domain or Philistine heredity belong purely to the vulgar-vittle category is dried apple pie and this is barred from any syllabus of foods as approved by my father. Punkin' pie — yes, but not *dried* punkin' pie. I saw him once toss out a sample of such misapplied thrift, with such a gesture of disdain as he might have accorded a dried cow chip. It was held in about the same esteem.

Fresh punkin' pie rated well with him. In fact, third. His favorite was green apple pie, on the heels of which came mince with little between. And then punkin' richly endowed with cream and eggs, a blush of good New Orleans molasses, and a nip of ginger. These three made a comely triad for the topping off of lusty meals. Any one of which must, of course, be accompanied by a generous slice of cheese — old fashioned American cheese ripened to mellowness and with enough bite to proclaim its presence. Yes, pie must certainly remain on our list of vulgar vittles.

III

The names of special dishes, as I catalog them, are not entirely unfamiliar even now. The names remain, the ingredients can be had,

but the *art* is well-nigh lost. Flour, shortening, apples, and sugar will make what may be termed an apple pie. The *art* lies in the manner and the spirit with which they are assembled. The art of cooking cannot be practiced in cold blood. Present cooks, because they lack the spirit, must have definite instructions. Older cooks had "rules" but no rule told you exactly how much sugar to put in an apple pie. It depended upon the fruit, so of course you had to know your apples. You cannot "cut a cabbage leaf to make an apple pie."

We occasionally get what optimists call Mince Pie. But the contents of such offerings bears small relation to that which came out of a crock in my mother's cellar. Over that she and my father held solemn conclave. The meat (from our own or a neighbor's butchering) was selected with care, cooked with understanding, and its own rich flavor emended with suet. The apples were selected for flavor and texture. But when these two were molded into a concordant whole, exactly proportioned, a committee of two held jurisdictional council over the kitchen stove: so much boiled cider (boiled *down* by slow degrees until only the essence of apple remained). Spices — all-spice and cinnamon precisely ad-

justed to the tongue's demand; sugar (brown) and molasses to suit the apple's need; and last of all, the final and crowning touch to make perfection perfect, a dash of brandy, or, perhaps, a *lee-tle* more, aye, just a *lee-tle more*, until with eyes introspectively closed, the world and all its mundane cares shut duly out, palate, tongue, and lips, tip and touch, touch and taste, could work in perfect unison to attain a super excellence known only to the connoisseur; an amalgamated mass suitable to one purpose only, the utter satisfaction of mortal man. Hot or cold, the mince pie as fed to farmer folk in Southern Michigan fifty years ago was the gourmet's dream of ambrosial fare. And apple pie no less. But again, not *dried* apple pie. My father thought little more of dried apple than he did of dried pumpkin.

Do beverages belong in a catalog of vulgar vittles? Such few as were favorites of my father did, I am sure. Chief among them was buttermilk. He thought, and I was early imbued with his belief, that, outside of water, no drink could so quench honest thirst as well as buttermilk.

My father was always impatient for the butter to come, both so he could have his slice of fresh bread properly anointed and also for the

quart or so of fresh buttermilk to drink with it. He liked it well salted, so he kept a salt-cellar handy while he drank. Butter made in this way left a richer content than any you can get nowadays with "separated" milk. It was slightly sour, naturally, being made from lobbered milk. It was rich, since it was not impoverished in its own right, and there were even tiny specks of butter left in it to ease its way down the throat. Every farmer kept pigs and calves who were supposed to be provisioned at least in part by the by-products of butter making—lobbered milk and buttermilk. But my father must have kept fewer, or they fared worse than his neighbors', for we drank much of the buttermilk and made Dutch cheese of the soured milk.

In this impoverished day, when imposing trucks resembling huge jelly rolls on wheels go rolling handsomely along the roads carrying the morning's milk to be translated into butter for tomorrow's breakfast, I sometimes stop at a roadside stand where "Fresh Buttermilk" is cried. I think, foolishly, "Maybe they know where they can get it. Maybe it is *real*." Fresh it may be, but it is not real. At least it never came out of a stone churn; it never was made from

cream skimmed off lobbered milk, *and it is not buttermilk*. The famous denunciation accorded to spinach goes here as well. I have not even been able to find a stone churn and I have been looking for one for three years. What chance have I then of finding buttermilk?

Switchel was not, I should think, a drink to brag about, and I shouldn't go out of my way to resurrect a jug of that, but it made a mighty satisfactory throat-wash for a man in a hayfield in days before thermos bottles were thought of. A jugful was made up before the men started out in the morning (cold water, vinegar, and molasses or brown sugar, with just a touch of ginger), and put under the edge of a hay cock on the north side to keep cool. Often on a hot day my mother and I used to carry a jugful to my father in mid-morning.

Coffee and tea were common to every board, but these, like all the foods I have named, differed in preparation from the way they are made today. Both were made in tin pots and both were boiled. Green tea was universally used, and brought to the table strong enough to float an egg. It stained the pot; it stained the cups; and it must have stained the lining of the stomach. Coffee was better. It, too, was boiled, and settled with egg

shell; or the coffee and white of egg were mixed, put into cold water (a pint to a tablespoonful of ground coffee), and boiled. Coffee was, of course, bought in the green bean, roasted in the oven, and ground in the coffee mill fastened to the kitchen wall.

Cider was drunk by the gallon — by the barrel in the fall while it was sweet and until the spirit in it got too mettlesome for common use. Cider at meals with roast pork, boiled dinner, baked ham. Cider in the evening with fried-cakes or popcorn. Cider at the mill where it is nothing more than fresh apple juice and you sucked it from the miller's old tin cup, through a straw. We still get cider. Road-stands abound with it (a more authentic product than their buttermilk) and they even provide you with a straw. But nevertheless you do not know the fun of drinking through a *straw* straw at the mill, or of drawing a pitcherful, ice cold, from the barrel in the cellar to set before the fire to warm.

This is so with all these homely foods and drinks belonging to a day when only the real and primitive were available. You get the name, you get something that is by nature the same, you get the substance — but the *spirit* of my father's vulgar vittles is not there.

I PICKET FOR A LIVING

ANONYMOUS

I HAVE done my heel-and-toe act in a hundred picket lines in the last two years, carrying placards and yelling at passers-by for more causes, real and phony, than you can shake a stick at. I have picketed practically every kind of business you might mention: restaurants and cigar stores, newspaper plants and garment factories, steamship lines and movie houses, liquor stores and night clubs. In addition I have paraded with angry signs in front of places where no labor troubles were involved: department stores that sold boycotted goods, consulates of various nations, office buildings where some tenant was in the doghouse, and lots of government buildings. I have even picketed other pickets: for the CIO against the AF of L, for the AF of L against the CIO, and for independent unions against them both.

Despite all this exercise for the cause, I am not even a union member, unless you count the Relievers' Workers Alliance in that class. I have never worked in restaurants,

cigar stores, or liquor shops; I have never been to sea or worked on a paper or sewed cloaks and suits. And what's more I'm not much interested in causes and boycotts or in anything but "number one." Then why all the sidewalk hoofing?

The answer is that in all the picketing I have been just a hired hand — or shall we say hired feet? — paid for being angry as a proxy for someone else. In plain words, I am a professional picket, one of thousands in this line of endeavor. Everything considered, it's healthy outdoor work — except for a riot now and then — and no less reputable than other work I could mention. I make no apologies. Sure, I'm not particular whom I picket or why, and I would as soon march outside an unfair union as an unfair boss. But what of it? Doesn't a lawyer take on any case that comes along?

Calling it a profession, or even a trade, perhaps gives the work too much dignity. But whatever you call it, you must accept the fact. The miles and miles of picket lines

all over the country — what would they amount to laid end to end? — are to-day a means of more or less regular employment for an army of men and women who can use the fifty cents or dollar an hour, which is the normal rate of pay. The sad-looking fellow marching under a picket sign who touches your heart may be a legitimate striker or protester against something — or he may not. My own guess would be that about every tenth picketer is a professional, but of course no one can prove a guess like that.

I've become something of an expert on picketing. Once upon a time it was just a method of keeping scabs out of a factory or mine or store. With the Depression boom in labor trouble, that side of it zoomed a lot. Over and above that, however, picketing has been taken over for any number of other purposes. It has been promoted to the job of bringing pressure in relation to such things as political squabbles; fights between rival unions; quarrels about local or Federal laws, housing and public Relief; foreign wars, including civil wars; radio programs; unwelcome foreign ships or visitors — and that's only a partial list. Once only so-called Reds and labor people took up picketing, but by this time society dames, anti-Reds, and even the bosses use

this method. Picketing has a nuisance value for almost anything — this discovery may go down among the important developments in the 1930's, like television, WPA, and radio quizzes.

With so much picketing under way, naturally there aren't enough real strikers or real hotheads for causes to go around, and that's where the profession of picketing comes in. The great majority of picketers, as I have said, are on the line from conviction or because some organization to which they belong has ordered them out, and the difference is made up by the professionals like myself, earning an honest dollar for themselves and their families.

A check-up on the pickets arrested during a long-drawn-out row between a restaurant workers' union and a lunch-room chain last winter showed that of about 1100 who were pinched, only about 400 were actual members of that union. Of these 400, only 33 had ever worked for the company the union was trying to organize. Maybe that's an extreme case, and likely some of the non-members were volunteers and not paid hikers. But I can tell you from two years of personal experience that the hired picketer plays a bigger part than the public suspects. In

fact, some of the oldest and most respectable unions are among the biggest users of our services — they have good fat treasuries and can afford to hire professionals. Many a self-respecting union man refuses to do picket duty now that it's become a sort of jack-of-all-trade and lost its exclusive union standing. That, too, means more work for the professional pickets.

I'll admit it doesn't take much brains to walk back and forth outside a building carrying a sign. (Personally I have more than the quota of brains needed for the profession, I think.) But there are lots of angles to the picketing racket. Possibly you've noticed some of them yourself. Maybe you passed a picketed shoe store or soda fountain and wondered how it was that the bird who was doing the spieling (the "captain," in picket lingo) could have become so eloquent of a sudden; you've never met a soda jerker or shoe-horn artist who could sling language so well. Or you may have seen a line of down-at-heel gorillas doing the old back-and-forth outside a swell apartment house, and wondered how a fancy place like that ever came to hire such crummy looking help to begin with.

The answer, the chances are, is simple — professional pickets.

II

I broke into the business out on the Coast, where I had drifted in the hope of spending an easy winter in that sunkist climate, and maybe finding some work. It didn't take me long to learn that California had at least a hundred times as many hobos as there were jobs for floaters. When the little money I had began to run low, I decided to clear out, and it was then I met Eddie.

I had always steered clear of the transient Relief camps that have sprung up over the country, because I didn't like the idea of chumming with a lot of punk kids and social workers. But having a long way to travel with the little money I had left, I decided to give the Government's hospitality a trial. It was after eating supper that I got to talking with Eddie, or rather that he got to talking with me. Eddie was from New York, and he was a shrewd article. He eased up to me in the recreation hall and offered me a cigarette. I hadn't smoked a tailor-made butt in two weeks, so I said to myself, "Well, here is a pretty nice guy."

I was looking to see what the catch was, though, and I wasn't kept guessing long. As soon as Eddie had pumped enough infor-

mation out of me to learn that I was broke and out of a job, he asked me how I would like to have a few drinks. I went along with him because, besides wanting a slug or two of red-eye, I was anxious to find out what his racket was. In the bar, Eddie got to the point pretty quickly.

He asked me if I was a union man, and I said no, but I thought it a pretty good idea to add that I was strong for unions. That was fine, he said, very fine. Then he went into a song-and-dance on the subject of labor and capital — the usual sort of stuff you hear from soap-box boys in the reservations for hot-gospelers. Then, flashing a roll of dough in my face, he asked me how I'd like to pick up a few easy bucks.

To make a long story short, Eddie was a union organizer. He had several strikes going in L.A., he said, but a lot of the workers were too yellow to stand up for their rights and wouldn't do picket duty. The union had to hire pickets instead, Eddie went on, and if I was interested he would guarantee me at least four dollars a day, just to walk up and down and carry signs. Well, the money wasn't thrilling, but it was just four dollars a day better than starving. And the work was a grade better, I thought, than

being a sandwich man. Besides, Eddie said he could square me with the transient shelter for free room and board. I had always thought you could only stay in these joints for two or three days, but Eddie had a pull somewhere up the line, because I stayed there about a month and had a room to myself.

The next morning I went to work. I walked up and down in front of a butcher shop with a sign telling the world that the owner had locked out employes for joining the meat-cutters' union. I soon learned from the conversations I overheard that the fellows working inside had been there for years and that there wasn't any strike. The other pickets soon owned up that they were no more meat-cutters than I was. This all looked pretty phony to me, and I was getting ready to run when a cop came in sight. About that time Eddie showed up too.

"What's this? There isn't any strike here," I said. "What are you trying to do, get us thrown in the jug?" Eddie laughed. "Don't worry about the cop — he's here to protect the rights of the workers. We'll make the rich so-and-so listen to reason. We'll make him pay living wages or put him out of business."

The meat-cutters behind the

counter all seemed to me pretty well-fed and I said as much. This made Eddie pretty sore, but he didn't quarrel with me — maybe he was short of pickets. After four hours, five new pickets showed up to take our places and we went back to the shelter to be paid off.

That was my introduction to the picketing trade. I haunted the butcher shop for about two weeks, until one day a squad of goons showed up from union headquarters — at least so they said — and began to pick arguments with the boss and his customers. (A goon, in case your education isn't up to it, is a slugger who is hired to start trouble, and he's usually pretty expert at it.) Now I had seen one or two of these riots before I got into the racket, and wasn't taking any chances on getting my head broken, or even getting arrested. So I handed my sign to one of the sluggers and beat it.

I had a day's pay coming, but I couldn't find Eddie. He didn't show up at the shelter that night. Several of us whom he owed money were mad enough to bite. Later we found out that he had been arrested in a riot resulting from one of his other strikes. The cops had taken his finger-prints and thus found out that he had a police record as long as your arm. Unions,

I suppose, have their Eddies, just as big business has its Musica-Costers.

That washed me up with the racket for awhile. I was frankly afraid that if I hung around Los Angeles the cops might pick me up too, as a pal of Eddie. It wasn't until I had drifted back East, where I ran into one of the fellows who had hoofed the pavements with me on the Coast, that I returned to the fold. This fellow informed me that the town was full of labor troubles and there was plenty of work in our line. Being good and broke again, I decided to give my new trade another fling. I went with my friend to the cafeteria where the picketing mob made its headquarters and met the man who could fix me up. Jack Turner, this fellow called himself. He was an outspoken guy, or maybe he was painting a rosy picture for us. "You don't have to be afraid of the cops here; they're on our side," he told us. And he was telling the truth in that case. The union always got the benefit of the doubt in this town, which made the practice of my trade that much easier. Jack Turner liked me, and I liked him because he didn't try to convert me. I was just a hired hand and I gave service for the money I drew.

My first job under Turner was

not very pleasant. He had me picket a suburban grocery store. The owner, who looked like a good-natured old man, had refused to hire two extra clerks as the union insisted, though he made no objection to his regular help joining up. Turner took us out there "to show him who was the boss." Turner himself did the spiel, and you could have heard him two blocks off: "Don't trade in this store, folks, it's unfair to labor!" He kept this up for about an hour, and finally the old grocer lost his temper. He ran out on the sidewalk and began marching up and down alongside Turner, shouting, "Prove it! prove it!" every time Turner said anything.

A crowd soon gathered. Turner also began to lose his temper, especially because the crowd, being local people, seemed on the grocer's side. Turner went over angrily to the cop and demanded that the grocer be arrested for "interfering with labor's right to organize." The cop refused at first, but when Turner threatened "to call up City Hall," the copper gave in and called the wagon. The next day, when I reported to Turner, he gave me a new assignment. The grocer, I learned, had been fined for disorderly conduct and bawled out by the magistrate into the bargain.

Somehow I felt sorry for the old boy, and since then I have seen many things on the picket-line that made me feel like a heel. Luckily the next few jobs after this grocery thing were more legitimate — real strikes for hours and wages. This time I was in for good: one piece of work led to another and the end is not yet in sight.

The professionals, incidentally, get a lot of competition from amateurs, or "volunteers," as they call themselves. There seem to be lots of people, on Relief or in the WPA or otherwise enjoying leisure, who like the excitement. No doubt a few of them volunteer out of a sense of duty, others because they want to show how self-sacrificing for the cause they can be. When Turner was short of funds, which was often enough, he made good use of such volunteers.

They are especially good for "mass picketing." That's when a real mob gangs up on one spot, and it's usually a scheme for getting into the papers. It attracts attention by blocking traffic, brings out reporters, and sometimes draws sympathy from the public. If necessary, with a mob milling around, it's easy enough to break a window, slug someone, or stir up trouble some other way. Usually the volun-

teers take the rap, and some of them like it, because it makes them martyrs. The leaders know how to keep out of it and we professionals have been through too many brawls to get caught.

The noble-minded outsiders, of course, can be got only on big jobs, when there's a lot of publicity. The ordinary run-of-the-mill strike or protest picketing must depend on the help of professionals. I have some dull stretches, but on the whole business is good. Sooner or

later some union organizer or contact man I've come to know throws work my way. Certain cafeterias serve as centers and without the management knowing it they are, so to speak, picket agencies.

Do I like the work? Not much. The rate per hour or day sounds good, but at the end of a year it doesn't add up too well. All the same, I am not ashamed of my profession. I could tell you what some other guys do! I only picket for a living.



THE SAN FRANCISCO DISTURBANCE

By JAMES STEVENS

AT TWELVE minutes after five on Wednesday morning, April 18, 1906, Professor George Davidson of the University of California was sleeping. Time ticked on. The earth sighed. And the professor awoke in a trembling bed. He methodically arose and carefully counted seconds as he went toward the table on which his watch lay. There he braced himself, to measure the duration of the seismic disturbance that had aroused him, and to note its movement.

Over a span of some three hundred miles, from Ukiah in the north down to San Luis Obispo, a million Californians awoke to the convulsive roll of the ground wave, or saw it shake their homes, "like a terrier shaking a rat," as they got ready for work. Folk in the Redwood Empire awoke, according to their own accounts, to stare as in a nightmare as great trees were lashed like whips shaken by titans in the earth. On a steep mountain slope miners roused up to find their bunkhouse sliding to the bottom of the canyon. The bells

through all the Bay Region clanged in frenzy with the shocks; then, as the earth trembled into quiet, some of them tolled.

As the vast saucer of the region's crust of earth slipped and shook, disaster struck all its centers of human life. Every brick building in Santa Rosa was felled or ruined. Whole business blocks in San Jose crashed as one structure. At Agnews the insane asylum crashed, killing 119 patients, attendants, and physicians. Ruin followed the roll of the ground waves through the new Stanford University. In the Suisun marshes of Solano County a mile and a half of railroad track sank from three to six feet. And everywhere, even in the thick of wreckage and death, the question ran, "What of San Francisco?" The question echoed round the world, as the first earthquake extras struck the streets of a thousand cities.

San Francisco sits on the hills and in the valleys and flats of a peninsula that noses north, into the shoulder of her storied water-

way and the Pacific — the junction called the Golden Gate. In 1906 the peninsula was crowded with a population of more than 400,000 souls. San Francisco was the unrivaled queen-city of a still-romantic West; glamorous with her legends of wealth, romance and adventure; and promising more riches in her future than had ever been mined from the Sierras. It was the city of Mark Twain, Bret Harte, Frank Norris, and Jack London; of the Hearsts, Stanford, Crocker, and Flood. Beautiful, romantic San Francisco, rich, young, and free. The anxiety of the world was focused there as the headlines were made up from the meager news by wire on that April morning.

The disturbance came without sign or warning. The weather forecast for the day was "fair and warm, with a light north wind". At 5:12 the four faces of the clock in the tower of the Ferry Building, at the Bay-front end of Market Street, were looking at a normal awakening of the city, through a serene Spring dawn. Then, to quote from Professor Davidson's report to the press, "the earthquake came, from the north to the south. . . . The first sixty seconds were most severe; the disturbance then decreased gradually for thirty sec-

onds; there was a slight lull, and then for sixty seconds more the shocks continued." The hands of the Ferry Building clock stopped at 5:15.

This was a "corkscrew" quake, rotating the recording pencils of seismographs in such insane circles that they were thrust from their graphs at the peak of the shocks. The San Francisco peninsula, ridged up between two bodies of deep water, was shaken violently four ways. For three incredible minutes the city crashed and roared. On the Bay front old Long Wharf collapsed under the bunkers of the Southern Pacific, and tens of thousands of tons of coal went into the Bay. Up west of Market the deep stopes of Chinatown caved in. In the slums of Howard Street, eastward from Market, old brick flop-houses and flats crumbled apart and roofs smashed down on poor families, tramps, and alley dwellers. Hundreds of horses and uncounted men in the produce streets of the wholesale district were buried under torrents of brick and mortar from toppling walls. Horses, wagons, men, and bricks were mingled in windrows of death.

A Hearst reporter, homeward bound from the morning *Examiner*, saw the great buildings of

Market Street rocking against the sky, the pavement between them bulging up in waves — “like a hog wallow” — the trolley rails twisting into serpentine tracks, immense fissures opening in the sidewalks and asphalt, and was possessed by the conviction that “the avenging hand of God” had struck San Francisco because the city harbored the Barbary Coast. He spoke to three policemen, but they stood like men of stone. He crossed a street, heard a rending roar behind him, and turned to see the three figures in uniform vanish under a falling wall.

It was a paralyzing, then a terrifying, clap of doom to all San Francisco. But most of the population recovered readily enough from the immediate effects of the disturbance. They expected earthquakes, and had experienced many lesser ones. Despite the violence of this one, there was good fortune in its hour. Docks, factories, offices, and schools were vacant. In the greater area of the city, that of detached homes — nine-tenths of them wood — there was scant loss of life, few injuries except from falling plaster. Fires that started there were put out. Market Street’s proud new buildings, the walls bound to webs of steel girders, still stood. The devastated blocks were

in districts that civic leaders had been planning to raze and rebuild. Hope surged up in the first minutes of panic, and men joined together to rescue from the ruins the injured and the dead. Twenty minutes after the last tremors of the earth volunteers had improvised hospitals in service on Market Street.

But the seismic disturbance was only the prologue of an epic tragedy. It set the stage and rang up the curtain for the greatest fire in the nation’s history, a burn-out of the city’s metropolitan and industrial districts within a circumference of twenty-five miles. The facts well sustain the contention of good San Franciscans — that the quake was but the cause of the real disaster, the great fire.

II

The fire broke out in a thousand places. Gas mains and service lines had been torn apart. Broken trolley wires lay in the streets, spitting sparks. Live electric cords dangled from opened walls. Kitchens serviced with gas blew up. Flames burst from the wrecked boiler rooms and fire boxes of factories and planing mills down in the Mission district.

When the gas works south of

Market Street exploded, it was as a starting-gun for hell to break loose and run wild through blocks of ruin. The city's entire fire department was called out, but except in the outlying residential sections, the firemen were helpless. The big water mains and laterals in the neighborhood of Market Street had been either disrupted or dammed. In the metropolitan area the fire department's station houses collapsed, some of them under the ruins of adjacent big buildings. Fire Chief Sullivan was disabled when a cornice slab from the California Hotel plummeted into his quarters. Within the twenty-five mile circle of congested buildings and materials the flames roared up from a thousand points, their bursts of smoke clouding the sun, their blasts of heat starting wind-whirls that widened, then joined with the force of a gale. Lumber yards, oil tanks, the vast stocks of combustible materials in freight sheds, warehouses, factories, and retail stores—every such center was to become a furnace of destruction before another dawn.

In the Call Building, tallest west of the Rockies, fire ballooned from the wrecked boiler room and presses and struck the great dome with such force and heat that the thick plates of glass cracked and

fell away. This was repeated in the new-domed city hall, and in a score of lesser buildings. Before noon the Palace Hotel was gutted. The St. Francis, the Fairmount, and the Lick Hotels escaped, their fleeing guests mingling in panic with the refugees from the slums of Howard Street.

Two press wires, one south and one east, remained in service. They carried stories of a city helplessly burning, of a population in frenzied flight, of a breakdown of ferry service and other means of transportation, of growing bands of looters and ghouls. "So many are dead in San Francisco," reported one earthquake extra, "that the use of U. S. Navy transports has been requested in order to carry the bodies out to sea for burial."

But in the thick of the thousand spreading fires San Francisco was already being brought to order. Two leaders had joined in an emergency dictatorship. They were General Frederick A. Funston and Mayor Eugene E. Schmitz. Funston was already a hero; he had quit the farms of Kansas to join the Army as a private, was famed as the captor of Aguinaldo, and held temporary command of the California Department of the Army. Schmitz, son of a German father and Irish mother, was a veteran of the

Yukon gold rush, a fiddler who had come up in the Musicians' Union, and then on to the office of mayor of San Francisco. The farmer and the fiddler took charge together before the disaster was an hour old, and they kept leadership in harmony until rebuilding began.

Funston's forces were marched downtown and organized into hospital units, fire-fighting detachments, rescue squads, and guards. "I will count on receiving the necessary authority," the little Kansan wired the War Department. Meanwhile Schmitz was disposing his cops and firemen in units for co-operation with the soldiers.

Horses and wagons were sent on the gallop to outlying powder houses, and all the dynamite on the Peninsula was hauled to the borders of the Mission districts, to blast down buildings as barricades against the fire. When the flames leaped them, the makeshift hospitals and morgues were moved on, and the injured and the dead were borne along. The milling mobs of refugees were routed upwind and toward the safer residential hills. The prowlers and looters amid the wrecked banks, jewelry stores, rich shops, and saloons of Market Street were driven off when the guards got orders to shoot all thieves on sight and with-

out warning. The General wired the War Department to start every available stick of canvas on the way to San Francisco, to make shelter for the homeless. The mayor wired an appeal to every large community in the country for bedding and food and tents. All able-bodied citizens were drafted for fire fighting and rescue work.

All this was done before the sun had climbed to noon above the darkening cloud of smoke. By that time the city of 400,000 was again coming to order. The frantic exodus by way of the ferries was stopped when the boats were held at the Oakland docks. At noon a freight ferry churned out from the Oakland pier. It carried more dynamite to make new barriers of blasted masonry and brick against the fire's progress. Throughout the afternoon and on into the night Funston and Schmitz continued their work of organization. Sanitary posts were provided, a water-supply brigade formed, relief depots established. Orders went out to the police guards to confiscate the goods of profiteers. A desperate effort to hold the fire from the residential section to the west and south was now being directed like a battle in actual war. San Francisco took heart. Panic went down with the sun.

There had been periodic "settling" shocks during the day that felled already-weakened walls and killed many firemen and rescue-workers. Each brought a fresh scarehead extra to the nation's streets. But also during the day came the cool, concise messages from Funston, reducing hysteria everywhere by plain information and precise statements of what was needed for relief. One said:

Fire is making no progress west from Van Ness Ave. West wind of considerable force now beginning. Indications now that all that part of the city south of Van Ness Ave. and north of Bay will be destroyed. . . . Weather continues fine and warm; practically no suffering from cold. It will be impossible to at once establish proper sanitary conditions. Much sickness must necessarily be expected. . . .

Through Wednesday night the fire grew greater. Watchers from the western hills saw it as a heavy crimson cloud, with the gutted skeletons of Market Street towers black and stark against it.

The west wind held, and the mass attack of flame from the northwest side of Market Street was slowed down. At the top of the T it was stopped by the Bay,

and on the southeast it was stalled by the tracks of the Southern Pacific and the Townsend Street yards. To the south the fire-fighters were pinching the thrust of the flames down to a point. Funston wired: "The Spring Valley people believe that they can deliver from ten to twelve million gallons per day." Supplies began to come down the peninsula and over the Bay. A host of visitors moved upon the city, most of them searching for relatives and friends. Authors appeared, taking notes.

Outside the world relaxed and dug into its pocket and stores in response to the Mayor's appeals. Within three more days the homeless were housed in tents, the fire was held and smoldering down, and the sound of hammers and saws were already heard through the drifting smoke. San Francisco buried its dead — 450, according to the official death list — and estimated its property at \$300,000,000.

Then rain came. The last spark of the great fire was doused. A fleet of lumber ships steamed in from Puget Sound. The city went to work, and the San Francisco disturbance passed into history.



HERE COMES THE BRIDEGROOM

A Story

By WHITFIELD COOK

HE DECIDED he could relax for a few minutes. He hadn't really relaxed all day. And he knew he shouldn't get overtired. But when you were sixty-four and engaged to a girl of twenty-three, you had to keep on your toes. You had to be alert every moment, so you'd remember to listen carefully to everything that was said and laugh in the right places and hold your stomach in and not make little sucking sounds with your teeth. It was a tiring business. But it was worth it for Helen's sake.

Just the same he was glad of a few minutes alone. He sank down into a long lounge chair, knowing perfectly well he shouldn't because he always looked awkward getting out of it. But for a little while he would allow himself to sprawl. He slowly drank a Scotch and soda. And he stared out past the terrace, past the rose gardens and the long vista, to the low hills. Without his glasses they looked blurred and dream-like. He began thinking

about his honeymoon. They were going to Europe, and he was going to take Helen to all the places he loved, to Scotland, to Brittany, to the Villa Savini near Florence.

Helen was so agreeable about things. For a young girl, she showed amazing good sense. She didn't have a lot of flighty ideas of her own. She seemed quite willing to abide by his decisions. And she seemed to want so little. He wished she wanted more, because then he'd know what to do for her. He would like very much to do things for her, to spend money on her. When he bought her things, she seemed pleased and grateful but never really enthusiastic. Norman thought maybe she was shy. After all, they'd had so little time alone. When they were alone together, they'd really get to know each other. Tomorrow was the wedding, and then they could go away and leave all his relatives and friends and her mother far behind. And he'd have Helen all to himself.

He had not finished his drink when Cornelia, his sister, came out onto the terrace. Norman didn't get up. Cornelia sat on a straight iron chair and waved her handkerchief in front of her face. "I told you June was going to be hot," she said. Norman juggled the ice in his glass with a sense of irritation.

"Where's Helen?" said Cornelia.

"Down at the pool," said Norman. And then before she had time to ask, he added, "With Crane."

He knew Cornelia was going to ask. It was just like her. Of all the people who gave their opinions of his coming marriage, he resented Cornelia most. She was only a year older than himself, and with her conservative, old-lady ways she was a constant reminder of his own age. Sometimes he thought that since he'd become engaged to Helen, she had purposely made herself seem older. He could understand that it had been a shock to Cornelia. Sometimes the suddenness of it made him a little uneasy himself. At moments, his engagement and impending marriage seemed unreal, and he'd have a vague feeling that something would happen and Helen wouldn't marry him at all. He knew it was silly to feel that way, that it was nothing but nervous over-anxiety. Nevertheless, at times, there it was.

He turned away from Cornelia and thought about the first time he had seen Helen. Crane had brought her up from the inn, where she and her mother were staying. "Look what I found, Uncle," he had said. And Norman had immediately approved of her. She had loose blonde hair and a calm face and a quiet manner. Norman had thought, if Amy and I had had a daughter, she would be like this girl. Then she and Crane had gone off riding together, and Norman had felt jealous. Not jealous of Crane, exactly, but jealous of his youth, which made Helen turn to him naturally. And it was not many days after that that he began reminding himself that he was not old as men go and that his wife had been dead for twelve years.

Webb Forrester, who was only fifty-nine, waved energetically as he came across the lawn. He came up onto the terrace and slapped Norman loudly on the back.

"How's the gay old dog?" he said. "Is the bridegroom getting nervous?"

Norman grinned sheepishly. His coming marriage had brought out a latent collegiate streak in Webb.

"May I drown my sorrows in Scotch?" said Webb, pouring himself a drink. "After all, *I'm* not getting a beautiful blonde tomorrow.

I'm not getting anybody. Cornelia, what would I have to do to get you?"

"You're a fool, Webb," said Cornelia.

"How have these decrepit old men got the nerve. That's what I want to know." He laughed uproariously and slapped Norman on the back again.

Norman stood up and lit a cigar. He had to be careful. Webb was making him nervous, and when he got nervous he was likely to be distressed by a particularly obvious form of indigestion. He walked to the edge of the terrace and surreptitiously rubbed his stomach.

He realized that the hot afternoon was full of the fragrance of roses. It filled him with a nostalgia for something he couldn't quite recall. He didn't think it had to do with Helen.

II

Helen's mother drove in the driveway in the car Norman had given Helen. She got out and came sweeping towards the terrace, her bracelets jingling and her picture hat flapping.

"You'll never know how exhausted I am. I've spent the whole afternoon at the church. But now everything's ready. Every *single*

thing. I've just rehearsed the flower girls again for a solid hour."

"I want to be rehearsed again, too," said Webb. "Can't I rehearse some more?"

"Oh, you don't need another rehearsal," said Helen's mother. "You've been best man so *many* times."

Norman knew what Webb would say next; and he said it. "Often a best man, never a bride." Webb roared with laughter.

Helen's mother made appreciative twittery sounds in her throat. She sat down, though she didn't relax. Mrs. Newell never relaxed. You might think she was going to, but she never did. She was like a dog which circles round and round before settling down. Only, unlike the dog, she kept circling forever. She was always making fat, meaningless little movements with her hands.

"Norman, dear," she said, "would you fix your old mother-in-law a teensy-weensy drink?"

She always treated Norman as if he were a boy of twenty. And, as he bounded a little too youthfully towards the liquor table, Norman realized with embarrassment that with her he tried to be that age.

"I want to tell you that church was *stifling*," said Mrs. Newell. "If it's this hot tomorrow, well . . ."

She shook her head from side to side and at the same time lowered it till she saw her brooch and unpinned it. "Where's Helen?" she asked suddenly.

"Swimming," said Norman.

"With Crane?" asked Mrs. Newell.

She hurriedly pinned her brooch on again. She looked angry. "I'm going to get her," she said, rising. "She's had enough swimming for today."

At that moment, Helen and Crane came strolling up through the garden.

She is beautiful, thought Norman, she's the most beautiful girl I've ever known. Her skin was light amber contrasted with the white robe she wore, and her face was still and poised and shining. She had a yellow rose twisted in her pale hair.

Norman felt very proud. That's my wife, he thought. He tried not to notice Crane as he walked along beside Helen. Crane had on just his swimming trunks, and his body was brown and young. And his face beneath his crew haircut was neat and firm. Norman hated his youth. He tried not to dislike Crane. After all, the boy had done nothing to him. He was a nice fellow, even if he did belong to the poor branch of the family. And during the two

years he'd been Norman's secretary he had worked hard and well. It wasn't his fault that he was young.

"What a fine-looking couple they make," said Cornelia crisply. She didn't look at Norman.

"Well, Helen dearest," said Mrs. Newell, "I thought I told you to rest this afternoon."

"Oh, there'll be plenty of time to rest," said Helen vaguely.

"And Norman's been sitting here all alone," reproached Mrs. Newell.

Helen wrinkled her nose at Norman and smiled. "He didn't mind, did you, Norman?"

Norman smiled back at her. She went and stood by him. She pushed him gently into a chair and sat on the arm of it.

Crane slipped a sweater over his head.

"Do you want a drink, Helen?" said Webb.

"Yes, I think I do," said Helen.

Mrs. Newell twisted her big turquoise ring. "Oh, now, dearest," she said, "I think you've had enough to drink today."

Helen was expressionless. "Then I guess I don't," she said.

"I see you've been stealing Norman's roses," twittered Mrs. Newell.

"Crane picked it for me," said Helen.

"It's beautiful with your hair," said Norman.

Cornelia placed a bookmark in her magazine and laid it down. "I have never cared much for the color yellow," she said. "I suppose because it has always been associated with cowardice."

Helen looked at Cornelia.

"I remember once when we lived in Kansas City," said Helen.

"Oh, Kansas City," laughed Mrs. Newell apologetically. "We've lived all over, you know. Really *all over!*"

"... Our entire garden consisted of one yellow rose bush. I nursed it like a child. I would have been heartbroken if it had died. It was the one bright spot in that whole year. It was a terrible year. We didn't have a cent."

Mrs. Newell looked at Helen quickly. She made several nervous gestures and rattled her bracelets. She laughed with strained grace. "Our money was so tied up in real estate and bad investments and things," she said, "it *seemed* as if we didn't have a cent." She laughed again.

Cornelia smiled faintly.

Helen turned her head away from all of them and stared down across the garden.

"From now on, of course," said Cornelia to Mrs. Newell, "you

won't have to worry about money matters. You'll have Norman."

Mrs. Newell gurgled with confusion.

"I mean," continued Cornelia, "he can advise you on your investments."

"Yes," cooed Mrs. Newell, "it will be such a help."

Norman took Helen's hand and held it to his cheek. She loosened it after a moment and patted him tenderly. Then she began twisting a strand of his thin gray hair.

The afternoon seemed stiller than ever and heavier with the scent of roses.

"Helen, what *are* you doing?" said Mrs. Newell, giggling. "Oh, Normie, 'ittle wifey's mussin' big boy's hair *all up!*"

Cornelia rose and went into the house.

"There's a street dance down in the village tonight," said Crane. "Why don't we all go for a while. Might be fun."

"Why, Crane," said Mrs. Newell, "Helen couldn't go to a street dance tonight."

"Why not?"

"Why, tomorrow's her wedding day!" She looked at Helen archly. "Isn't it, baby?" She giggled.

Norman giggled, too. Then he wished he hadn't. Helen hadn't laughed. Neither had Crane. Crane

had walked across the terrace and poured himself a drink.

"Well, I'll go with you, Crane," said Webb. "We two will go to the dance and pick up a couple of village belles, as consolation prizes." He laughed and laughed.

"Oh, Webb," said Mrs. Newell. "Oh, you!"

She looked at her wrist-watch, held it to her ear, looked at it again, and began a whole series of fluttering movements. "Heavens, it's time to dress for dinner. Come, Helen dearest, we *must* go back to the inn. It's late, and we have *millions* of things to do."

"What?" asked Helen.

"Oh, millions of things!"

"Maybe the bride and groom would like a few moments alone," said Webb.

That made Norman feel silly. He smiled foolishly.

"Oh, maybe they would," laughed Mrs. Newell. "You take me to the car, Webb. Helen, I'll give you five minutes. Then I'm going to begin honking the horn and making a terrible noise. Come along, Crane. Let the young people enjoy themselves."

She moved away towards the driveway, and Webb and Crane followed.

Norman smiled rather shyly at Helen. Helen smiled back at him in

a friendly way and leaned her head against his. She sighed deeply.

There was so much Norman wanted to say. But if he tried to say it, the words would be heavy and confused. There was much that Helen should know. She should know about Amy, how Amy had always been more like a good and kind housekeeper than a wife. As he had progressed and become an important and successful man, Amy had gradually faded into the background. She hadn't been able to progress with him.

They had never had a deep mutual love for one another. And they had never had children to hold them together. Now Norman needed somebody to be very close to him. He wanted to say that to Helen. He wanted to say that he had spent all his life making money and building up a business. And now he had retired, and his business was going right along without him. And it was a funny feeling, knowing that the world could get along without you. And he had nothing to do now; so he wanted to enjoy himself, to have fun with some one he could love dearly, really to be happy with some one who loved him. He wanted to convey to her the sadness in a man as he feels his ability to enjoy things growing dulled, as he feels his reactions

growing slower, his personality blurring. Then she would see how much more love could mean to an old man than to a young one. It could mean everything in his life; it could be the straw at which the drowning swimmer clutches.

But how could he say all this? Instead he said, "A penny for your thoughts, my dear."

"My thoughts," teased Helen, smiling vaguely down at him. "Now there's something I don't sell."

Suddenly Norman had an uneasy feeling. He became aware that he was sitting with his finger tips pressed together. He quickly moved his hands. Only old men sat that way.

He took Helen's hand and patted it fondly. Maybe she understood all the things he had in his mind. She looked very wise.

"You're beautiful, Helen," he said. "You're so terribly beautiful."

"You sweet," said Helen.

Mrs. Newell began honking the horn.

Helen kissed Norman's forehead swiftly and ran down the terrace steps.

He heard the car drive away; and then there were only soft sounds in the air. He listened to the birds in the garden. He felt tired.

III

That night Cornelia gave a dinner for the bridal party. It was very gay, and most of them laughed a lot. Mrs. Newell kept telling everybody how she had felt just before her wedding. And Webb rambled on with many puns about why he'd never married. Cornelia said little; and Crane played haunting melodies on the piano. Helen and her mother went home early, and Webb took the maid of honor down to the village dance. And the party broke up.

Before he went to bed, Norman walked out into the garden. There was a refreshing coolness in the air. The moon shone through the willow trees. He thought about what he would send Helen in the morning. It would be a note saying, "To Helen, from her husband, with deepest love." And he would enclose a check for \$50,000.

He felt lonely. He knew he was in a world of his own, the secret world of the middle-aged romantic. And no one could follow him there. He smelled the scent of the roses, and he knew it was his youth it made him remember. Summer nights were fragrant and moonlit like this when he was eighteen. And nineteen. And twenty. And how had he been then? He tried to

recall the zest of body, the quick eagerness of mind, the lovely terrors of emotions. He tried to remember what love had been like then. . . . But after a while he went into the house, because he was afraid the dampness would make his legs ache.

He slept well, and when he woke he felt fine and happy. It was good to wake up one day in your sixty-fifth year and realize it was your wedding day. He lay in bed and thought how lucky he was.

Then he phoned Helen.

"Good morning, my dear," he said.

"Hello, Norman," said Helen.

He attempted a joke. "There's no law against the groom phoning the bride on their wedding morning, is there?"

"I hope not."

"I have something to tell you."

"What?"

"I love you, Helen."

"You sweet," said Helen.

"Have you anything to tell me?"

"Yes. In a few hours we'll be an old married couple."

That was not what he wanted to hear. "I love you, Helen," he said.

But then he remembered that young people were more casual about love. He must joke again. "Well, see you in church," he said. But it fell rather flat.

As he shaved, he surveyed his face critically. He guessed he could be called handsome for a man of his age. His hair was a fine color gray, and he still had his firm, clean-cut profile. And when he got a collar on, the sagging skin of his neck didn't show.

He dressed carefully, and he felt, when he stood before the mirror in his cutaway, that he was a distinguished-looking figure. He guessed maybe Helen could be proud of him. He hummed a bit as he went downstairs. Crane, who was to be an usher, was just leaving. He looked tired and serious. He wore a yellow rose.

Norman drove to the church with Cornelia and Webb. Cornelia kept looking out the car window. "Well, Norman, I hope you're happy," she said flatly.

"Happy," said Webb. "Why, he's going to be the happiest man in the world, aren't you, Norman? He already is the happiest man. Why, I'll bet there's not another man in the country as happy as Norman is right now. Unless, perhaps, it's another bridegroom." He laughed and laughed.

At the church there was a great deal of bustle and excitement. Norman saw Mrs. Newell for a moment. She was breathless and frantic with joy and emotion.

"Oh, Normie darling," she whispered, clutching his arm, "we got your marvelous gift. It was so wonderful of you. Just so wonderful. We were just overcome by it. And such a surprise!"

When he and Webb were waiting in the choir room and he heard the organ music, he began to feel uneasy. He didn't want to go out there in front of all those people. He couldn't help but know what they'd be thinking. He and Helen shouldn't have had a big wedding like this. It was ridiculous. After all, he was not young. If he were a young man, he'd go out there and people would look at him, and it would be nice. But he was an old man, and he'd go out there, and people would look at him, and it would not be nice. He'd be too much of a curiosity, like something in a side-show.

He heard the *Wedding March*. Then Webb said, "Well, here we go, you old devil."

He walked out and took his place. He saw Helen coming down the aisle. He saw the faces of the spectators, getting their money's worth. He knew what they were thinking: isn't she beautiful. But he's so old. How can she marry an old man like that? Well, you know why she's marrying him. There's

only one reason a young girl marries an old man like that. . . . No, it isn't true, Norman wanted to say. He felt them all staring at him and thinking that, and he wanted to shout, No, it isn't true.

Helen was beside him, and the service began. He couldn't listen to the minister. He sounded far away. He looked at Helen. Her ivory face was still and respectful as she followed the service. She was so beautiful that Norman felt afraid of her. Helen, he thought, love me a little, be kind to me. Be patient. I won't ask much. Just a little tender love. I only have ten or fifteen more years. Let's be happy. Please let's be very happy!

Helen stood there straight and cool in her simple wedding dress, a white prayer book in one hand, and her veil pinned on with a single yellow rose.

". . . I pronounce you man and wife."

The ceremony was over, and he leaned over to kiss Helen. She made a slight involuntary movement of her head, which turned her mouth a little away from him. In the excitement of the moment no one could have noticed it. Maybe even Helen herself was unaware of it. But Norman was aware of it. He felt old and lonely.

THE STATE OF THE UNION

By ALBERT JAY NOCK

The Criminality of the State

AS WELL as I can judge, the general attitude of Americans who are at all interested in foreign affairs is one of astonishment, coupled with distaste, displeasure, or horror, according to the individual observer's capacity for emotional excitement. Perhaps I ought to shade this statement a little in order to keep on the safe side, and say that this is the most generally-expressed attitude.

All our institutional voices—the press, pulpit, forum—are pitched to the note of amazed indignation at one or another phase of the current goings-on in Europe and Asia. This leads me to believe that our people generally are viewing with wonder as well as repugnance certain conspicuous actions of various foreign States; for instance, the barbarous behavior of the German State towards some of its own citizens; the merciless despotism of the Soviet Russian State; the ruthless imperialism of the Italian State; the murders and executions of the Spanish Red State; the bombings of civilians by the

Spanish Fascist State; the “betrayal of Czecho-Slovakia” by the British and French States; the savagery of the Japanese State; the brutishness of the Chinese State's mercenaries; and so on, here or there, all over the globe—this sort of thing is showing itself to be against our people's grain, and they are speaking out about it in wrathful surprise.

I am cordially with them on every point but one. I am with them in repugnance, horror, indignation, disgust, but not in astonishment. The history of the State being what it is, and its testimony being as invariable and eloquent as it is, I am obliged to say that the naïve tone of surprise wherewith our people complain of these matters strikes me as a pretty sad reflection on their intelligence. Suppose someone were impolite enough to ask them the gruff question, “Well, what do you expect?”—what rational answer could they give? I know of none.

Polite or impolite, that is just the question which ought to be

put every time a story of State villainy appears in the news. It ought to be thrown at our public day after day, from every newspaper, periodical, lecture-platform, and radio-station in the land; and it ought to be backed up by a simple appeal to history, a simple invitation to look at the record. The British State has sold the Czech State down the river by a despicable trick; very well, be as disgusted and angry as you like, but don't be astonished; what would you expect? — just take a look at the British State's record! The German State is persecuting great masses of its people, the Russian State is holding a purge, the Italian State is grabbing territory, the Japanese State is buccaneering all along the Asiatic Coast; horrible, yes, but for Heaven's sake don't lose your head over it, for what would you expect? — look at the record!

That is how every public presentation of these facts ought to run if Americans are ever going to grow up into an adult attitude towards them. Also, in order to keep down the great American sin of self-righteousness, every public presentation ought to draw the deadly parallel with the record of the American State. The German State is persecuting a minority, just as the American State did

after 1776; the Italian State breaks into Ethiopia, just as the American State broke into Mexico; the Japanese State kills off the Manchurian tribes in wholesale lots, just as the American State did the Indian tribes; the British State practices large-scale carpet-bagging, like the American State after 1864; the imperialist French State massacres native civilians on their own soil, as the American State did in pursuit of its imperialistic policies in the Pacific; and so on.

In this way, perhaps, our people might get into their heads some glimmering of the fact that the State's criminality is nothing new and nothing to be wondered at. It began when the first predatory group of men clustered together and formed the State, and it will continue as long as the State exists in the world, because the State is fundamentally an anti-social institution, fundamentally criminal. The idea that the State originated to serve any kind of social purpose is completely unhistorical. It originated in conquest and confiscation — that is to say, in crime. It originated for the purpose of maintaining the division of society into an owning-and-exploiting class and a propertyless dependent class — that is, for a criminal purpose.

No State known to history

originated in any other manner, or for any other purpose. Like all predatory or parasitic institutions, its first instinct is that of self-preservation. All its enterprises are directed first towards preserving its own life, and, second, towards increasing its own power and enlarging the scope of its own activity. For the sake of this it will, and regularly does, commit any crime which circumstances make expedient. In the last analysis, what is the German, Italian, French, or British State now actually doing? It is ruining its own people in order to preserve itself, to enhance its own power and prestige, and extend its own authority; and the American State is doing the same thing to the utmost of its opportunities.

What, then, is a little matter like a treaty to the French or British State? Merely a scrap of paper — Bethmann-Hollweg described it exactly. Why be astonished when the German or Russian State murders its citizens? The American State would do the same thing under the same circumstances. In fact, eighty years ago it did murder a great many of them for no other crime in the world but that they did not wish to live under its rule any longer; and if that is a crime, then the colonists led by G. Washington were hardened

criminals and the Fourth of July is nothing but a cutthroat's holiday.

The weaker the State is, the less power it has to commit crime. Where in Europe today does the State have the best criminal record? Where it is weakest: in Switzerland, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Luxemburg, Sweden, Monaco, Andorra. Yet when the Dutch State, for instance, was strong, its criminality was appalling; in Java it massacred 9000 persons in one morning, which is considerably ahead of Hitler's record or Stalin's. It would not do the like today, for it could not; the Dutch people do not give it that much power, and would not stand for such conduct. When the Swedish State was a great empire, its record, say from 1660 to 1670, was fearful. What does all this mean but that if you do not want the State to act like a criminal, you must disarm it as you would a criminal; you must keep it weak. The State will always be criminal in proportion to its strength; a weak State will always be as criminal as it can be, or dare be, but if it is kept down to the proper limit of weakness — which, by the way, is a vast deal lower limit than people are led to believe — its criminality may be safely got on with.

So it strikes me that instead of

sweating blood over the iniquity of foreign States, my fellow-citizens would do a great deal better by themselves to make sure that the American State is not strong enough to carry out the like iniquities here. The stronger the American State is allowed to grow, the higher its record of criminality will grow, according to its opportunities and temptations. If, then, instead of devoting energy, time, and money to warding off wholly imaginary and fanciful dangers from criminals thousands of miles away, our people turn their patriotic fervor loose on the only source from which danger can proceed, they will be doing their full duty by their country.

Two able and sensible American publicists — Isabel Paterson, of the New York *Herald Tribune*, and W. J. Cameron, of the Ford Motor Company — have lately called our public's attention to the great truth that if you give the State power to do something *for* you, you give it an exact equivalent of power to do something *to* you. I wish every editor, publicist, teacher, preacher, and lecturer would keep hammering that truth into American heads until they get it nailed fast there, never to come loose. The State was organized in this country with power

to do all kinds of things *for* the people, and the people in their short-sighted stupidity, have been adding to that power ever since. After 1789, John Adams said that, so far from being a democracy or a democratic republic, the political organization of the country was that of "a monarchical republic, or, if you will, a limited monarchy"; the powers of its President were far greater than those of "an avoyer, a consul, a podesta, a doge, a stadtholder; nay, than a king of Poland; nay, than a king of Sparta." If all that was true in 1789 — and it was true — what is to be said of the American State at the present time, after a century and a half of steady centralization and continuous increments of power?

Power, for instance, to "help business" by auctioning off concessions, subsidies, tariffs, land-grants, franchises; power to help business by ever-encroaching regulations, supervisions, various forms of control. All this power was freely given; it all carried with it the equivalent power to do things *to* business; and see what a banditti of sharking political careerists are doing to business now! Power to afford "relief" to proletarians; and see what the State has done to those proletarians now in the way of systematic debauchery of what-

ever self-respect and self-reliance they may have had! Power this way, power that way; and all ultimately used *against* the interests of the people who surrendered that power on the pretext that it was to be used *for* those interests.

Many now believe that with the rise of the "totalitarian" State the world has entered upon a new era of barbarism. It has not. The totalitarian State is only the State; the kind of thing it does is only what the State has always done with unflinching regularity, if it had the power to do it, wherever and whenever its own aggrandizement made that kind of thing expedient. Give any State like power hereafter, and put it in like circumstances, and it will do precisely the same kind of thing. The State will unflinchingly aggrandize itself, if only it has the power, first at the expense of its own citizens, and then at the expense of anyone else in sight. It has always done so, and always will.

II

The idea that the State is a social institution, and that with a fine upright man like Mr. Chamberlain at the head of it, or a charming person like Mr. Roosevelt, there can be no question about its

being honorably and nobly managed—all this is just so much sticky fly-paper. Men in that position usually make a good deal of their honor, and some of them indeed may have some (though if they had any I cannot understand their letting themselves be put in that position) but the machine they are running will run on rails which are laid only one way, which is from crime to crime. In the old days, the partition of Czecho-Slovakia or the taking-over of Austria would have been arranged by rigamarole among a few highly polished gentlemen in stiff shirts ornamented with fine ribbons. Hitler simply arranged it the way old Frederick arranged his share in the first partition of Poland; he arranged the annexation of Austria the way Louis XIV arranged that of Alsace. There is more or less of a fashion, perhaps, in the way these things are done, but the point is that they always come out exactly the same in the end.

Furthermore, the idea that the procedure of the "democratic" State is any less criminal than that of the State under any other fancy name, is rubbish. The country is now being surfeited with journalistic garbage about our great sister-democracy, England, its fine dem-

ocratic government, its vast beneficent gift for ruling subject peoples, and so on; but does anyone ever look up the criminal record of the British State? The bombardment of Copenhagen; the Boer war; the Sepoy Rebellion; the starvation of Germans by the post-Armistice blockade; the massacre of natives in India, Afghanistan, Jamaica; the employment of Hessians to kill off American colonists. What is the difference, moral or actual, between Kitchener's democratic concentration-camps and the totalitarian concentration-camps maintained by Herr Hitler? The totalitarian general Badoglio is a pretty hard-boiled brother, if you like, but how about the democratic general O'Dwyer and Governor Eyre? Any of the three stands up pretty well beside our own democratic virtuoso, Hell-roaring Jake Smith, in his treatment of the Filipinos; and you can't say fairer than that.

As for the British State's talent for a kindly and generous colonial administration, I shall not rake up old scores by citing the bill of particulars set forth in the Declaration of Independence; I shall consider India only, not even going into matters like the Kaffir war or the Wairau incident in New Zealand. Our democratic British

cousins in India in the Eighteenth Century must have learned their trade from Pizarro and Cortez. Edmund Burke called them "birds of prey and passage." Even the directors of the East India Company admitted that "the vast fortunes acquired in the inland trade have been obtained by a scene of the most tyrannical and oppressive conduct that was ever known in any age or country." Describing a journey, Warren Hastings wrote that "most of the petty towns and *serais* were deserted at our approach"; the people ran off into the woods at the mere sight of a white man. There was the iniquitous salt-monopoly; there was extortion everywhere, practiced by enterprising rascals in league with a corrupt police; there was taxation which confiscated almost half the products of the soil.

If it be said that Britain was not a sister-democracy in those days, and has since reformed, one might well ask how much of the reformation is due to circumstances, and how much to a change of heart. Besides, the Black-and-Tans were in our day; so was the post-Armistice blockade; General O'Dwyer's massacre was not more than a dozen years ago; and there are plenty alive who remember Kitchener's concentration-camps.

No, "democratic" State practice is nothing more or less than State practice. It does not differ from Marxist State practice, Fascist State practice, or any other.

Here is the Golden Rule of sound citizenship, the first and greatest lesson in the study of politics: *you get the same order of criminality from any State to which you give power to exercise it; and whatever power you give the State to do things for you carries with it the equivalent power*

to do things to you. A citizenry which has learned that one short lesson has but little more left to learn. Stripping the American State of the enormous power it has acquired is a full-time job for our citizens and a stirring one; and if they attend to it properly they will have no energy to spare for fighting communism, or for hating Hitler, or for worrying about South America or Spain, or for anything whatever, except what goes on right here in the United States.



REMARKS ON A WELL-KNOWN EXECUTIVE *

BY THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

The resistance opposed to him by the tribunals inflamed him to fury. He reviled his chancellor. He kicked the shins of his judges. He did not, it is true, intend to act unjustly. He firmly believed that he was doing right, and defending the cause of the poor against the wealthy. Yet this well-meant meddling probably did far more harm than all the explosions of his evil passions during the whole of his long reign. We could make shift to live under a debauchee or a tyrant; but to be ruled by a busy-body is more than human nature can bear.

* *Frederick the Great.*

AMERICANA

ALABAMA

THAT Montgomery, the First Capital of the Confederacy, is still revenging itself on the North for Appomattox is evident from Item 6 in a report of the Jones Bible School published in the *Advertiser*:

Sixth, the Jones Bible School has married off thirty-eight girls who were ringleaders of the underworld life, and most of them married ministers living in various parts of the North. The records of these girls are subject to verification by Col. W. P. Screws.

KENTUCKY

AN erudite Senator reaches new heights of irrelevancy, in a memorial oration chronicled by the adoring *Sun-Democrat* of his home town, Paducah:

A capacity crowd filled the Paducah Elks club assembly room Sunday afternoon for the club's 47th annual memorial service in honor of four members who died during the past year. . . . Senator Alben W. Barkley was the principal speaker. Touching on conditions that exist in foreign countries, he called attention to the fact that justice and liberty have always been upheld in the United States, and declared that today this country is the stronghold of freedom and democracy.

MISSISSIPPI

THAT the poetic strain runs broad and deep in Greenville may be surmised from a letter, published in the *Delta Democrat Times*, reporting how nobly Mrs. Morris Goldstein entertained her husband's fellow-Masons:

Those and honors like them are golden links that bind us together into one faithful band of friends and brothers these, and honors like these, are as delightful as the music made by the song birds along the flowery fringed shores of the river of life.

NEW YORK

MIKE GOLD, the sage of Union Square, prescribes closer social contacts between horny-handed labor and fair undergraduates, in our totalitarian *Daily Worker*:

Let each trade union adopt, for permanent friendship, a chapter of the students' union. Once a month each group entertains the other. I want to see the longshoremen visiting the Barnard students on their campus, and vice versa. Both sides would have their horizons broadened.

FÜHRER BROWDER, writing in *The Communist* in a generous mood, accepts a few outcasts into his select society of "good" Americans:

We are Americans, American Communists, but do we claim that we are the *only Americans*, that we have staked out a monopoly on Americanism? Of course not, we would only be ridiculous with such a claim. The concept of "Good Americans," in the sense of the national democratic and revolutionary traditions, embraces the whole progressive majority of the people, and, further, extends to a degree among the conservative masses insofar as they show capacities of resistance to the modern forces of reaction.

An epidemic of sociability on the Cornell University campus at Ithaca wrings plaintive protest from the Dean of Women, in her appendix to the President's Report, under the head of Social Life:

The number of social affairs for men and women registered in the office totaled about six hundred and fifty. Three hundred and thirty-four different couples acted as chaperons. Checking with these and notifying dormitories takes a great deal of time, especially on weekends when the number runs from thirty to forty-five affairs.

OREGON

VARIATIONS on a Federal theme are played by the Solons in a great State determined to tax their way to plenty, according to a dispatch in the *Oregonian*:

A bill taxing Oregon bachelors over 25 years of age \$1,000 a year has been prepared for introduction at the assembly of the state legislature opening in Salem next Monday, it became known Friday.

The measure, which also embraces other taxes, was designed to permit payment of \$75 monthly to every living person in the state over 60 years of age who would quit work and spend the money within 30 days.

It was known that the bill also would levy a tax of 50 per cent on all court fines. For instance, a person fined \$50 would be required to pay the state an additional \$25.

PENNSYLVANIA

A HITHERTO unknown poet comes into his own in the sports department of the *Erie Daily Times* when four talented bowlers "were snuffed out by fate in an automobile crash":

This column wants to add just these few words today in tribute to those lads we always counted on seeing when the firing was at its height:

If they have bowling alleys away up there,

If such a thing's known as strike and spare;

We'll know when they rattle and fall for fair,

That these four lads will be getting their share.

TENNESSEE

A SIMPLE and complete solution of all the problems that bother statesmen in a troubled world, offered by the big-hearted Greenville *Sun*:

When the sun in the skies of our world is blotted out by the clouds of fear, pessimism, worry and despair, we must depend upon the sun within ourselves . . . Happiness is an inner

state . . . we must generate our own sunshine . . . we must carry it with us wherever we go to light the way through the darkness of defeat, to burn down obstacles, and to kindle the fire of victory . . .

THE same esteemed journal demonstrates its versatility by pointing the way to eternal youth and unending charm:

To what beauty party do you belong, my paper friend? Are you a liberal, taking a broad-minded view of each new fashion as it appears to excite the phrail sex? Or are you a conservative, tagging along one or two seasons late? Perhaps you are sitting on the fence, never able to decide which way to jump. It's no fun traveling in slow moving traffic. Jump on the beauty cart and get going. It is the only way to stay young and interesting.

TEXAS

AN august and criminal court boldly places Fatherhood above Justice, as reported proudly by *The Corpus Christi Caller*:

The continuance was granted after Roy Scott, Wenzel's attorney, entered a petition in which he declared that the stork was hovering over counsel's doorstep for the first time. The case was reset for the next term of court.

ROBBERS and sneak-thieves will steer clear of Jayton after the Jayton *Chronicle* gets through with a sizzling attack on their breed:

Sunday night, while honest men were taking their much needed rest, getting ready for another week of earnest effort to win their bread with sincere

and continuous labor, an organization of slimy thieves, unprincipled thugs, lousy loafers and anything and everything you may feel like calling them, lifted from the safes of five business firms in Kent County around \$500 in cash.

THE learned editors of the *Benavides Facts* console their townspeople for the lack of wild life in the oil country:

No need for the oil man to visit a menagerie when his own industry is so full of tame and trained specimens! The modern who's who of the petroleum "zoo" reads something like this:

Wildcat—oil well in undeveloped territory.

Bull rope—2½-inch power carrier to bull wheels which handle cable tool drilling lines.

Mud hogs—pumps circulating muddy fluid through drill stem to prevent walls from shoughing.

Fish—anything lost down a well.

Bull dog spears—steel spears for recovering "fish."

Donkey pumps—small pumps, once mulish in performance, used for odd jobs of pumping.

Spiders—steel rings holding drill pipe.

Grasshoppers—counterbalances on a pumping well.

Goose necks—crooked joints on drill-pipe driving joints to which mud-circulating hose is attached.

Pig tails—coils in refinery pipe for condensation of vapors.

Worms—ditto.

Boll weevils—new worker who doesn't know who's who!

Mouse traps—poles with latches used to fish sucker rods.

Dog house—clothing locker.

VERMONT

THE streamlined age makes itself felt even in the conservative want-ad columns of the dignified *New England Homestead*:

WANTED — COMPANION HOUSE-KEEPER, widow of sixty. With improvements.

VIRGINIA

LAST warning to the faithful Christians of Fredericksburg, as broadcast by an enterprising businessman-citizen:

NOTICE

I have a few beautiful caskets left. Anyone expecting to need one now or right soon will save hundreds of dollars by applying to the undersigned this week, as I am selling out. Have no place to keep them. Will almost give them away.

J. W. DILLON
East Chatham,
North End of Free Bridge

WASHINGTON

THE sovereign voters of the up-and-coming town of Milton, according to the *Tacoma Times*, distinguish themselves in the democratic process of choosing a fitting representative:

The truth leaked out today. And Milton voters aren't so sure of themselves as they were. "Boston Curtis", duly nominated, certified, and elected Re-

publican precinct committeeman in the Milton precinct, with 51 votes to his credit, turns out to be a common garden variety of mule. He is one of the species made famous by the U. S. army.

Who put over the hoax on the voters or why is not indicated, but State Representative Kenneth Simmons vouches for the facts.

* * *

It seems the fame of Boston Curtis has spread far and wide, and Representative Simmons already has received a tentative offer from E. D. Leshin of Paramount Pictures. Simmons has wired to Hollywood for more details. If they meet his approval, he will then consult Mr. and Mrs. C. Curtis, the mule's owners.

IN OTHER UTOPIAS

GERMANY

A MOUTHPIECE of the new Aryan Kultur, *Archiv der Gesellschaft für Rassenbiologie* of Berlin, as quoted in *The Living Age*, proposes to bomb its way to race purity:

It is the crowded quarters which will suffer the most from bombing. Those quarters, however, are inhabited by those who have not succeeded in life — the refuse of the community, in fact, which would be well rid of them. Besides, the explosions of the bombs will inevitably cause many cases of madness. The person whose nervous system is deficient will not be able to survive the shock. In this way, bombing will help us to discover the neurasthenics in our community and to remove them from social life.

(THE MERCURY will pay \$1 for items accepted for Americana. Those found unsuitable cannot be returned.)

DOWN TO EARTH

BY ALAN DEVOR

Men Against the Trees

ANY seasoned vaudevillian knows that there are three infallible methods of plunging an audience into enraptured sentimentalism. The first method is to sing a song about Home; the second is to make reverent reference to Mother; the third is to recite Joyce Kilmer's verses about Trees. No audience, however tough or apathetic, is proof against these performances.

The psychologically-minded may find it profitable to ponder these things, and to reflect upon the singular divorce between the themes that stir people to wet-eyed sentimentalism and the themes that really move them to action. We break down on hearing references to Mother; and it is a matter of record that as a country we treat our female begetters with infinitely less respect than is customarily accorded the matriarchs of other lands. We are reduced to tears by the crudest ballad about Home; and it is a matter of record that we are the most nomadic tribe of itinerant apartment-dwellers on earth. Finally (and most relevantly

to the purport of the present treatise) we are moved by Mr. Kilmer's rhyme to moods of tremulous exaltation; and it is a matter of record that in our actual dealings with our native trees we have consistently displayed an unmatched flair for stupid and rapacious wood-butchery.

Human-kind and tree-kind have been fellow-dwellers on this whirling planet for a great many thousands of years. Since long before the dawn of the historical era, the oaks and pines and cedars of our earth have been furnishing to man the material for warming his bones, for building his shelters, for constructing his boats and bridges and artifacts. There is an age-old interdependency between the crafty two-legged mammal and his forests. Man has survived at all, only insofar as the trees have suffered him to do so; the forests have kept alive only insofar as ax-armed man has permitted them to live. And, since the very early days of the race, wise men have recognized this deep relationship and have

taken firm measures for its harmonious maintenance. The Aztecs perceived the enormous importance of trees, and formulated a strict and intelligent code of simple forestry. The Hebrews of antiquity, regarding trees not only as a lovely handiwork of their all-wise Yahweh but also as an inestimably valuable practical commodity, issued a stern decree (as your Old Testament will advise you) that whoso felled a tree must also plant another one to take its place. It is set down in the book of Deuteronomy that "the tree is man's life", and it is made plain that the despoiler of a forest is no better than the despoiler of a temple.

It has been the unlovely distinction of Americans to ignore these ancient and proven forest-lore, and by reckless gluttony to lay waste one of the most superbly-wooded countries in the world. Only a few short centuries have passed since the white man first set foot in America's virgin timberlands, and the record of his furious spoliation is a grim thing to read. Of the original forested area which he discovered, 43 per cent has been cut away for farms, 30 per cent has been cut and not appreciably restocked, 10 per cent has been laid waste and left completely barren. Almost 100,000,000 acres of our

sometime woodland have been subjected to such violent, unthinking assault that nothing now — unless planned and systematic replanting — can ever make them productive again. Relentlessly, and with no heed for the future, the lumbermen and settlers have carried on their work of destruction.

They began in the East, hewing the white pines and spruce for the masts of their ships and the frames of their houses, felling the oaks for the fashioning of hulls. For a hundred years they sacked New England without halt, planting not a single seed, heeding not a single law of the simplest forestry, and when finally the last stand of New England pine had fallen they moved on to new sources of supply. They moved westward. By 1850 they had brought about a lumberboom in the State of New York. Sawmill-towns sprang up; communities mushroomed into unhealthy existence. And presently, when the last tree had been leveled and there was no further fodder for the humming buzz-saws, the communities lapsed into impoverished decay and the lumbermen resumed their westward trek. In their wake they left desolation . . . vast, stump-dotted wastelands where not even a sapling stood,

where never a deer nor a fox could find sanctuary.

It is not necessary, nor is there space, to report in detail the westward progress of the army of invasion. For a time they halted in the region of the Great Lakes. It took them sixty years to accomplish their destruction there; but when they had finished they left behind them a treeless, sandy land incapable of supporting even simple farming. They pressed on westward. They attacked the ponderosa pine of the Rocky Mountain region, and, finding there a promise of great profit, they swarmed by thousands; they spread out fanwise and razed the southern woodlands from Norfolk to Galveston. At last they reached to Washington and Oregon. It was as far as they could go. The geographical limit of a once-rich land had finally been reached. Now, today, the sawmills are humming in this last unplundered section of the Northwest. When they have hummed a few more years the last of the aboriginal forest will have been destroyed, and from Atlantic to Pacific there will be found substantially no trace of the stately timber which, by the use of a jot of restraint or of intelligent forethought, could now have been our heritage.

It is not a very pretty tale to spin, even in brief outline. It is the less pretty when the details are examined . . . such details as the erosion of 70,000 acres of land in a single county because the topsoil-saving trees are gone. Year by year the Red River in Tennessee grows redder and more moiled, and a man need be no very learned forester to know the reason: the soil is washing down. In the Wasatch Mountains, near Great Salt Lake, there has been flood and avalanche; in Virginia and Mississippi the eroded earth today gapes with gullies a hundred feet in depth. It is not easy, reflecting on these things, to forget that many centuries ago there was once another country—the country of the Medes and the Persians—where man unthinkingly destroyed his trees. It is a desert now. No man can live in it.

II

It is not the lumbermen alone, of course, who have despoiled the forests. Our unmatched record in wood-butchery has been the achievement, in large degree, of the citizenry at large . . . that blithe, uncaring citizenry of hunters and hikers and picnickers who deem it an inalienable right to use tobacco

and build campfires under any and all circumstances, and who have upheld this right so sturdily that of every 1,000,000 wooded acres some 2,000 now annually go up in flames. Trees by millions are reduced, in these yearly Autumn holocausts, to blackened skeletons; unnumbered myriads of small furred and feathered forest-dwellers, seeking refuge in oak-top and alder-thicket from the two-legged predator, are burned to death. Then, too, to the destruction wrought by flame and sawmill must be added the tree-slaughter effected by the farmers. The American farmer has never troubled to learn, as have the farmers of the older English and Continental countrysides, that the trees which grow on brook-banks and sharply-sloping hillsides are better left alone. Just as the farmer has indiscriminately warred on hawks and crows and owls, without inquiry into even rudimentary ecology, so has he heedlessly upset Nature's balance by exterminating every tree that has stood in the way of his plow. From the farmhouse window beside which this is written, it is possible to look out and see a swift-flowing little brook which cleaves a fertile pasture.

Each year the brook grows a few feet wider; each year the tumbling water gnaws away a hundred or a thousand additional tons of soil. The succession of avid farmers who owned this land relentlessly extirpated the brook-bordering willows, in order that every possible inch of soil might be used for grazing or cultivation. Now, year by year, the soil is disappearing. Within a decade or less, the pasture will have ceased to be a pasture. It will be only a stony, grassless waste.

There are times, in a day like ours, when a man may well fall to wondering whether there is anything which he can usefully do toward stemming the tides of disaster which are everywhere so evident. In politics, in economics, in religion . . . is there anything that he can do? I am unable to say. But I think he might thoughtfully look out upon the land in which he lives, and might reflect that 300,000,000 acres have already been brought to ruin, and that 3,000,000,000 tons of fecund earth are each year sliding to the ocean. And I submit that (reflecting upon these matters) he might do worse than go out and plant a tree.

POETRY

THE TWO GIFTS

BY SARA HENDERSON HAY

WAKING beside you, feeling your heart move
Deep in your side, that to my side lies pressed,
I am constrained to take you to my breast
In a great passion of tenderness, my love.
Out of my body's and my blood's desire
Weave you a cloak against whatever cold,
And bring such fagots as my heart can hold,
Kindle love's warm and unconsuming fire.

Strange, that your strength, whose waking ardor taught me
Joy in my woman's yielding, now could be
So innocent in slumber, and so mild,
That bending thus above you I can see
The two commingling gifts your hands have brought me,
The man my lover, and the sleeping child.

LOVE ME AS LIGHT

BY LOLA PERGAMENT

LOVE me as light loves intimately
bright acres, the wild grass, the autumn of
surrender,
as light loves wholesomely the whole splendor
of days that pass
like the tremble between hands bathed silkenly
in light
and the rhythm of our bodies in the night.

Love me as light loves — intimately.
I have seen tall buildings hold beauty with
the sun,
towering into day.

THE AMERICAN MERCURY

I have traveled the bright acres of your heart.
Through the wild grass I have stumbled, I have
fallen,
I have clung desperately to the roots in
the clay.

It is warm. Light lingers. Oh, under my body
this shadow of my own being, this darkness of
my own weight!

But the autumn is beautiful now that I have
found you
in the clear splendor of days, the whole
surrender.

I shall move toward you, bringing my shadow and
my shadow's weight.

Into the light of you I shall come, I shall
come home.

When the sun sets I shall not be late.

THE MEEK

By EDITH CHERRINGTON

At four o'clock on Sunday afternoon
You find him strolling meekly on the sward
That spreads across the graves and greens the yard
About the family plot where very soon
His body, with the rest of them, will lie.
He lingers here to watch the shadows climb
Across the marble head-stones, marking time
Against the moment when the senses die.

To see him there, the fighting spirit bred
Out of his features, every motion weak,
Is to be sure that he has never said
The valiant thing, nor will he ever seek
Adventure's monument. The meek are dead
And earth inherits, passively, the meek.

THE LIBRARY

How Pure the Puritans?

BY JOHN W. THOMASON, JR.

WHEN I was young in Texas, and went to the public school, our studies were somewhat embittered by the institution we called Friday Afternoon Speaking. That day, routine was suspended after the noon recess; interested parents and members of the Honorable the Board of Trustees appeared, dressed as for church, and sat on the rostrum; and designated victims, well-policed and freshly cleaned, were led forward to recite. We presented classic verse, and selections from well-known oratory: *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, I remember; and *Spartacus to the Gladiators*, and Logan's affecting speech to the white men. And particularly a poem, invariably around Thanksgiving time, from Mrs. Felicia Hemans' works, which began:

The breaking waves dashed high,
On a stern and rock-bound coast . . .

I forget the rest, but I recall the quivering agony with which I rendered it. Usually, that time of

the year, the schoolroom was appropriately decorated. Miss Gay, or Miss Hattie, or one of my succession of gentle and estimable teachers, hung a print, probably a Copley, to show a group of decent women in full skirts, with white caps and bibs, escorted by grim gentlemen in high crowned hats, jackets, and breeches, with blunderbusses; all under a threatening sky, a savage ocean behind them, and far off one lonely ship, outward bound. Later, one learned from Confederate relatives that those were the people who named the Constitution an agreement with Death and a Covenant with Hell, people identified with John Brown, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, with Abolition and Reconstruction, with Blue Laws, with the burning of silly old women, and sharp practice at trade, and cruel and repressive measures. The words Puritan, and Puritanism, came very early to stand for things definitely deplorable, so far as I was concerned.

That a similar feeling spread beyond my personal situation and section, is, I think, attested by the cartoons in the public prints, during the recent era of high-minded drouth in this country. Those warriors for freedom who lambasted the Prohibitionists through the medium of the crayon-pencil chose for their prototype the grim fellow of the Pilgrim print, high-crowned hat, lugubrious dark uniform, and all. Their tradition was one of bigotry, of sumptuary laws, of meddlesome interference with person and property rights, and — vide *The Scarlet Letter* — of gross hypocrisy. Puritanism was the foe of light and joy. The Puritans were bilious people, who stood against everything amusing or any fun. Whatever they touched turned gray or black.

All of which goes to show that it is not wise or sound to accept pre-digested notions; and that it is dangerous to read history backwards. Certainly the Puritans were the first of our articulate groups, and they colored, intimately or remotely, all the social patterns of the United States, and still color them, for they have extraordinary vitality and stamina. But neither the Puritans nor Puritanism were in the beginning what they are commonly believed to be. And as

to what they became, and what they are today, those are different things, responsive to various solvents for which New England can hardly be blamed. Further, any selected portion of the past has the right to be judged by its intention, rather than by our modern standards. Standards of morals and manners are mutable things, and the virtues of today shift surprisingly to become the defects of tomorrow.

With some such considerations in mind, Drs. Miller and Johnson,¹ savants of Harvard and of Lawrenceville School, respectively, have produced a very engaging compilation to show, by contemporary evidence, what manner of people and society was planted in New England colonies from the Seventeenth Century forward. "The Puritans," they note, "were not a bashful race, they could speak out and did; in their own words they painted their own portraits, their majestic strength and dignity, their humanity and solidity, more accurately than any admirer has been able to do; and also they have betrayed the moles and beams in their own eyes more clearly than any enemy has been able to point them out."

The origins were, as fable has it

¹ *The Puritans*, by Perry Miller and Thomas H. Johnson. \$3.50. American Book Co.

and in truth, religious. Puritanism began as an agitation within the Church of England in the latter half of the Sixteenth Century, as a movement for reform in that institution; but in no sense a secession from it. Its proponents were not content with the renovations following the departure from the Roman Church; they advocated a return, in symbol and letter, to first principles, to the *purity* of First Century Christianity, as preached by the Apostles. Hence the name Puritans. Otherwise, the Puritan congregations were a fair cross-section of contemporary England, exhibiting every insular racial trait and prejudice, and drawing from every stratum of English society. This is proved by numerous sermons and pronouncements from their leading men, here abundantly quoted. To abridge, then, Puritanism in the early sixteen hundreds was a philosophy of social stratification, placing the command in a hierarchy of the properly qualified, and demanding implicit obedience from the uneducated — in the religious field as well as in the social. In a word, it was autocratic, hierarchical, and authoritarian. There was in that day a rising tide of democracy, against which Puritanism aligned itself uncompromisingly — precisely

as the Catholic Spain pursued similar objectives, precisely as King Charles I stood for the Divine Right of Kings. Eventually its leaders took it out to the New World, where authoritarianism might hope to be more absolute. They sought freedom to worship God, ran Mrs. Hemans' felicitous verse. That is a masterpiece of understatement.

II

Drs. Miller and Johnson set forth the foregoing in an introductory essay, thus getting their ground firmly under them. They then proceed to examine the testimony, letting the Puritans themselves offer it, which is praiseworthy. There come William Bradford, of the first plantation, yeoman out of old England, and Governor of the Plymouth Colony for thirty years; John Winthrop, the Boston magnifico, a man of great will and character, who came in 1630; Edward Johnson, the joiner, also of the 1630 migration, who calls his history *Wonder-working Providence of Sions Savior*; and there is Cotton Mather, prodigy of erudition, who, in the third generation after the *Mayflower*, gathered the chronicles of a century in one stupendous volume. The selections are judiciously

chosen from the original renditions. The story they tell is well-known, for there was never anything reticent about the Puritans. They suffered from piratical shipmasters, leaky craft, and North Atlantic winter weather. The hand of God chastened them mightily in the first years, slaying men, women, and children. The mercy of God preserved a sanctified remnant; the plantations prospered and became firm in the new world. They set up a society after their own imagery, all sitting contented in the States to which it had pleased God to call them. They were free to worship, as Mrs. Hemans sings, and they capably saw to it that all hands worshiped after the authorized formulae. But I cannot find that they sent out missionaries to less enlightened sections.

Their theory of government had been clearly enunciated from the first, and the thunders of John Winthrop and Cotton Mather only amplified it: in a word, government by men fit to govern, and no democratic nonsense about it. In this, I think, lay the genesis of their sumptuary laws; the classes governed simply had to be kept in their places, and not allowed to ape their betters. The magnates and their ladies, in the matter of dress, for instance, adorned their

persons according to their means, went fine in silks and velvets, with ruffles, wigs, and dress swords. They found it a monstrous thing that low fellows off the wharves, and their drabs from the alleys — bound servants, carters, and the like — should flaunt embroidered waistcoats and ribands, as though they enjoyed pews well forward in the church; and they framed legislation to meet such cases.

After the same models, they enforced attendance upon religion, and set the forms of that attendance. Mr. Roger Williams "of lovely parts," a man otherwise respected, dissented; the gifted Mistress Hutchinson dissented, and they were put out of the colony. The Puritans were probably astonished at their own moderation in these and kindred matters. Yet it is noteworthy how, in all the mass of contemporary chronicle and comment presented, you find no attempts at self-justification. The Puritans were sure that they were right, and didn't need to argue the point.

They argued nearly everything else, endlessly; argued from the pulpit, around the tavern fires, over abundant dinner tables. The only thing that makes their interminable sermons readable, even in small sections, is the freshness and

vitality of the figures: the great Puritan divines spoke to their hearers in the idiom of the fields and the wood-lots, the ship yards and the taverns. Thomas Hooker, preaching on dispensation of grace, invites attention to the well-trained dog, sitting hungry but patient under the table while his master eats, grateful for the crumbs thrown him at the master's good pleasure . . . "you must not think that God will bee at your becke; no, you must bee content with the crumbs of mercy and pity, and lye under the table til the Lord let the crumbs fall. . . ."

This was all satisfactory to the Puritans, for nearly three generations. God made all things, and they were Fundamentalists. Government proceeded from God, through His chosen instruments; government was the action of God on reason. But two generations later one John Wise (1652-1725) was writing that Divine Command was not necessarily reason, and that you could get through to God without scriptural intermediaries. From there it is only a step to the philosophy which framed the Declaration of Independence. Here again you recall the theory of government and society, clearly shown in these pages, which drew the line between the governors and the governed,

between the silk and the linsey-woolsey; and set up the sumptuary laws to guard the line. It made the Puritan his neighbor's keeper, and finally broke his concepts down.

There is a great deal of meat in this book, and the most delightful part is that devoted to Manners, Customs, and Behavior. You read of the "sundrie notorious sins . . . espetically drunkennes and unclainnes; not only incontinencie betweene persons ummarried . . . but some married persons allso. But that which is worse, even sodomie and bugerie (things fearfull to name) have broak forth in this land . . ." — John Winthrop, in 1642. You find throughout a lot of drinking; the Puritan was neither a teetotaler nor a dry. Drink, said the pious Increase Mather, "is in itself a good creature of God, and to be received with thankfulness, but the abuse of drink is from Satan." You read the delightful journal of Mrs. Sarah Kemble Knight, woman of business, who rode horseback from Boston to New York in 1704, decent and alone except for post-riders and chance travelers. The trip took from October to March, a stupendous journey; and a lone woman had to be on her guard against overcharging and bad accommodations everywhere, pre-

cisely as today. You read Pastor Solomon Stoddard's views on wigs, and his "Did We Any Wrong To The Indians In Buying Their Land at A Small Price?" His conclusion is, No, we didn't; because we paid the Indians their price, and if it was small — well, they set it. Further, had the land continued in their hands, it would have been of little worth; they never did anything but hunt on it. It takes its value from our improvements.

I confess, moreover, to much pleasure in the biographies and letters. I would like to have known the saintly Eliot, a man of ripe classical mind, who devised an Indian catechism. Of him Cotton Mather wrote: "the *Apophthegms* of a Dying Eliot must have had in them a Grace and a Strain truly extraordinary; and indeed the vulgar Error of the signal sweetness in the Song of a dying Swan, was a very Truth in our Expiring Eliot; his last breath smelt strong of Heaven, and was articulated in none but very gracious Notes; one of the last whereof, was, *Welcome, Joy!*" Warm and human, also, is the diary of Samuel Sewall, man of affairs, who presided over the special court which burned the Salem witches, and afterwards made public acknowledgment of his error; and wrote, also, the first anti-slavery

tract in America. His wife died in February, 1718; in November he was writing: "My bowels yern" towards Mrs. Denison . . ." but she would not have him. Next year he courted Abigail Tilley with better luck, and after six months of wedded bliss he had to write, "About midnight my dear wife expired to our great astonishment, especially mine," which set him courting again. This time it was Madame Winthrop, and again he had no luck, until the Widow Gibbs took pity, and consented, as he put it, to change her state.

Finally, there is poetry and prose; the models are King James Version English, and there are no better models, at least.

On the whole, I recommend the work of Dr. Miller and Dr. Thompson. Of all the heavens in the American character of this century, the Puritan heaven is the strongest, and it is helpful to understand one's background. For the authoritarian theory of government, I do not care, myself — my people fought a war against that sort of thing, and lost it, but I think they were right. Yet the Puritan had courage and stamina, and a sense of responsibility, and those are good qualities, and not too common, anywhere or any time.

THE CHECK LIST

(Continued from front advertising section)

★★★★ indicate a book of exceptional and lasting merit. ★★★ a distinguished and valuable work. ★★ a readable and engaging volume. ★ a fair performance. ☆ an unimportant book, but possessing some characteristic of value. The absence of stars may be taken to mean the absence of merit.

BIOGRAPHY

★★★★ DAYS OF OUR YEARS, by Pierre van Paassen. \$3.50. *Hillman-Curl*. This ranks among the best of the autobiographical works by famous newspapermen. Mr. van Paassen had a unique Calvinist youth in Holland. He served briefly as a minister in Canada, and drifted into journalism, writing chiefly for the *New York World* until its demise. The element of adventure is prominent in his personal story. But his real concern is for the deeper currents of modern affairs. He has championed the Jews of the world, particularly the Zionists. The process of his awakening to this problem is among the most interesting in this absorbing and beautifully written volume. A Book-of-the-Month choice.

★★★★ THE WOMAN WHO COULD NOT DIE, by Iulia de Beausobre. \$2.50. *Viking Press*. A highly sensitive Russian woman, religious and mystical in temperament, has gone through twenty months of servitude in the GPU prisons and penal colonies of the Soviet paradise. In this memoir, written in safety in England, she has written an extraordinary record of her spiritual rather than physical ordeal. Though there are political implications in her story, the author's concern is rather with the sheer human element. She writes well and conveys the nuances of inner torture.

★★★★ MY LIFE AS A REBEL, by Angelica Balabanoff. \$3.75. *Harper's*. An ab-

sorbing autobiography by the first secretary of the Communist International, which is in effect a summation of the socialist and labor movements of Europe for the past forty years. Its pages provide exciting close-up studies of Mussolini, Lenin, Trotsky, Liebknecht, Jaures, and other figures in those movements. But the most interesting study is of the author herself: a genuinely idealistic woman hewing close to the line of personal and intellectual integrity. It is to her credit that she broke with the Bolsheviks a few years after the Russian Revolution, giving up the honeypots of power because she could not stomach the ways of terror and dictatorship.

★★★ LORD MACAULAY: Victorian Liberal, by Richmond Croom Beatty. \$3.00. *U. of Oklahoma Press*. At the age of four Thomas Babington Macaulay was a sprightly conversationalist; before he was eight he wrote *A Compendium of Universal History* — the tales of his precocity are legend. Later in life it was said that conversing with him was like talking to an encyclopedia. But things came too easy for Macaulay, and Victorian England was no place for a mind like his. Despite his gifts and success, he remained unsatisfied, almost a pathetic figure. Mr. Beatty has given Macaulay an excellent biography — the best to date.

★★★ TURBULENT YEARS, by Isaac F. Marcossion. \$3.50. *Dodd, Mead*. Thirty years of interviewing the great ones of the

earth for the *Saturday Evening Post* are compressed into this volume of reminiscence. The process of obtaining the interview, as well as the substance thereof, is in each case a part of the story. Among the figures whom he paints in words — much of it is surface painting without real depth but all of it stimulating — are kings, dictators, statesmen, wizards of finance. For a nodding acquaintance with such personalities as Hugo Stinnes, Ivar Krueger, Hindenburg, Kemal Ataturk, Trotsky, Clemenceau, the Mikado, Pilsudski (to mention a few in the list), Mr. Marcossion's book is to be highly recommended.

★★★★ EDVARD GRIEG, by David Morand-Johansen. \$4.00. *Princeton University Press*. A studious biography of the great Norwegian composer, stressing the split personality of Grieg's genius. As a boy he listened to folk music, then was transplanted to the Music Conservatory at Leipzig, where his talents were applied to the conventional forms. The music-minded will find much in this.

MISCELLANEOUS

★★★★ FULL RECOVERY OR STAGNATION? by Alvin H. Hansen. \$3.50. *Norton*. Although heavy going for the layman, this book is prescribed reading for any one who wants to understand the new economics by which most of the world is now being run. In the new economics, but for government intervention, large scale unemployment rather than full employment, is normal. All this, of course, is really not new. It was the prevailing economics for thousands of years before Adam Smith and the beginning of the Industrial Revolution a hundred and fifty years ago. Professor Hansen, a professional economist, expounds the new economics of government spending, lending, and management of money and credit, with appropriate references to the more important of the new school economists such as Keynes. He does not propound a novel

solution or any sort of a panacea, but states the problem of the hour and fairly analyzes the attempted solutions. He differs from the majority of professional economists not in that he fails to perceive the defects of all solutions under trial but in that he intelligently refuses to adhere to the majority view that all the system needs is a rest and a chance to recuperate by itself.

★★★★ THE FAR EASTERN POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES, by A. Whitney Griswold. \$3.75. *Harcourt, Brace*. A brilliant and scholarly work covering the whole field of our relations with Japan and China. It is likely to become the standard work on the subject. The documentation is exhaustive. Our Far Eastern policy is shown to have been characterized by alternating phases of bluff in announcing an Open Door in China and meek acquiescence in recognizing the fact that the door has never been open, or that the China trade has always been divided according to foreign spheres of influence. Our action, however, has been more consistent or realistic than our words or officially-proclaimed policy, for, having only microscopic interests in China, we have thus far refrained from fighting or committing ourselves to fight for them.

★★★★ CAPITALISM IN CRISIS, by James Harvey Rogers. \$2.50. *Yale University Press*. An excellent, brief, and popularly written exposition of certain of the outstanding reasons why capitalism is now in crisis; such as monopoly or rigid industrial prices with flexible industrial production versus flexible farm prices with inflexible production, the dilemma of savings that do not get fully and promptly invested, and the necessity for pump-priming public deficits. Professor Rogers is genuinely desirous of saving capitalism. This he would do by making it work, though not to the satisfaction of now prevailing tastes. He would immunize us against totalitarianism

by a mild inoculation of the same virus. Whether he is right as to the remedy or not, he is more nearly right in diagnosis than the orthodox economists who seek to reassure us that ours is a temporary emergency rather than a crisis of the system.

★★★★ THE STORY OF THE CIO, by Benjamin Stolberg. \$2.00. *Viking*. Good journalism and intelligent theorizing, partial to industrial unionism and the CIO in principle, but violently anti-Stalinist and strongly critical of the way many things have been done by the CIO. No one who aims to understand the current labor struggles in America can afford to skip this book.

★★★ BACK WHERE I CAME FROM, by A. J. Liebling. \$2.50. *Sheridan House*. Mr. Liebling came from the sidewalks of New York. On various newspapers and on the *New Yorker* he became known as an authority on the many screwy aspects of his home town. Now his best stories appear, somewhat amplified, in book form, and collectors of New Yorkana won't ask for anything better on their Eden. All the author's best screwballs are here, from the rocking-chair champion and the Colonel, his wife, to the philosophic local who says of the country, "It's a nice spot."

★★★ THIS IS DEMOCRACY, by Marquis W. Childs. \$2.50. *Yale University Press*. A splendid account of the economics of a splendidly run country. The title, however, should not be *This is Democracy* but *This is Sweden*. Alas, Swedish examples have little relevance to the economic or political problems of industrialized great powers, with a diversity of races and religions, and a heritage of international commitments, dangers, and hates.

★★ THE AMERICAN READER: Introduction and comments by Burton Rascoe. \$3.50. *Putnam's*. A wholly meritorious collection of American poetry and prose,

fiction, history, satire, criticism. The publishers have endeavored to present in one not-oversized volume the changing pattern of American letters, from Colonial times to the present; this from authors published or republished by the House of Putnam. The first selection is from Thomas Paine. There follow, among others, a chapter from Theodore Roosevelt's *Winning of the West*; James Fenimore Cooper on *USS Constitution*; some of Washington Irving and of Nathaniel Hawthorne; a chapter from Olmsted's *Journey in the Seaboard Slave States*. Among the period pieces is one of the *Potiphar Papers*, still acute and humorous; and the *Fatu-Liva Bird*, from the great Doctor Traprock's *Cruise of the Kawa*. The essay *Farewell to Model T* is pure delight. Poe leads the poets, and leads them by the length of the field. Finally, there is Herman Melville's *Benito Cereno*. On the whole, a book to buy, and keep by your bed for dependable reading.

★★ THE CAPTAINS AND THE KINGS DEPART: Journals and letters of Reginald, Viscount Esher. 2 vols. \$7.50. *Scribner's*. Viscount Esher was a distinguished Edwardian whose life and services were prolonged through the World War period: you run across his name in all the memoirs and records. He lived very near the throne, but he appears to have been one who avoided rather than sought honors and awards: he simply desired to serve. From 1905 onwards he was permanent member of the Committee of Imperial Defence; hence his notes and comments are authoritative. A great gentleman, high in the ruling caste and wholly devoted, he had no illusions about Captains and Kings. His function during the war was, I take it, that of a super liaison officer. While he was never a gossip, as Repington was, these papers offer absorbing glimpses of the important personalities of the War, and contain new material on the Imperial High Command and the inner circles of Allied politics.

THE OPEN FORUM

IN DEFENSE OF SOUTHERN COOKING

The rumpus stirred up by Isabelle Post's article on the *Southern Lady* looks minor indeed against the storm evoked by her reflections on cooking below the Mason-Dixon line. We merely record the fact, without comment, that Dixie seems to esteem its vittles above its women. The greater part of the protests, moreover, has come from men, whereas the defense of the *Southern Ladies* was conducted almost entirely by the ladies themselves. Male gallantry, quiescent in the face of strictures on the ladies, burst into full flame when *Southern Cooking* was opened to doubts — does it mean that the way to a man's gallantry is through his stomach?

Forthwith we shall cite sizzling and well-seasoned exemplars of letters wherein the authoress and the magazine are roasted to a turn — and a few letters of approval, printed in self-defense. Space limitation prevents more than a sampling: in the editorial offices these days we trudge knee-deep in protests (to put the matter mildly) on the subject. The consensus of comment from the South is that Miss Post gathered her culinary evidence exclusively at hot-dog stands and in low hasheries, if she was in Dixie at all.

* * *

SIR: As editor of the woman's page of the *New Orleans Times-Picayune*, I received Isabelle Post's so-called "Truth About Southern Cooking." I am sure Miss Post received no official invitation to take up her abode in the South and was not urged to remain. It was unfortunate, too, that she was unable to go to the better restaurants instead of eating at "greasy spoons."

Miss Post refers to grits as "a grain."

For your information, and for hers, grits is ground corn. Further, salt meal, meal, and molasses are very prominent in the meals of the poorest of the poor in the South, but they rarely appear on the tables of those who can buy what they wish. Cottonseed shortening is used by poor families to a large extent, but the cost is greater than it should be, thanks to the influence in Congress of Northern dairymen. Of course Miss Post did not find good pears, apples, plums, and cherries in the South, except those that were imported, for those fruits belong to cold climates. Neither did she ever see figs growing along the roadside in the North. As for green oranges, Nature matures them that way.

If you want to cook rice with milk; if you want to drink weak coffee; if you want to eat light bread instead of corn bread; and if you want to put sugar in biscuits, go ahead and do it. But, in fairness, don't say that the South eats only what the most unfortunate of its people eat, and don't say that we don't know how to cook.

ELLEN FOLEY

*New Orleans,
Louisiana.*

SIR: Off-hand I can think of a dozen ways I have cooked meats besides frying and I am sure a *really* good Southern cook has many more ways in her repertoire. As for using vegetable and cottonseed shortenings, it has been proven that they are much more digestible than pure lard and not so smelly and smoky. Or is Miss Post so far behind the times not to know this? Yes, the Southerners use spices — all sorts. So do the French, Italians, Spanish, Ger-

mans, et cetera. We do not use them to cover up inferior foods, however. I'll take spiced crab-apples with fried chicken or some of my mother's old-fashioned chowchow with a roast of beef any day in the week!

LILLIAN CLEWS

*College Park,
Georgia.*

SIR: From my experience, Miss Post's article is entirely misleading, and unfair to the South. I have spent four winters in the South, going out for meals. Nowhere else have I ever found as delicious food as at Jacksonville, Daytona Beach, and especially Miami. The cooking was not greasy, but dainty. One can live much better on the same money in the South than in the North.

D. COURSON

*Brooklyn,
New York.*

SIR: Evidently Miss Post did not include Arkansas in her itinerary, for in Arkansas there is the best cooking in the South and also the world. In Arkansas, each restaurant has a personality of its own, specializing in a certain field. But all of them can beat any Yankee restaurant. The North has surpassed us in population and wealth, but never will the North compare in cooking. That is the one thing that can never be taken away from us.

AN ANGRY SOUTHERNER

*Benton,
Arkansas.*

SIR: From the description of dishes Miss Post gave in her article, it is evident that she never has partaken of any real Southern cooking. I should like to give you a menu of the lunch I enjoyed at my home today: Roast beef, very lean and tender and neither "smothered" nor "drowned" in either spices or gravy. We also had a simple green salad with French dressing; rice and a meat gravy; spinach with hard-boiled eggs and vinegar; carrots stewed in butter and sea-

soning (I never heard of them boiled with salt pork); pickled green peppers, which, by the way, are delicious; iced tea; very good corn-bread, and a pudding with a sour lemon sauce.

This menu is typical of our lunch every day, as it also is of almost every home in the South I've ever visited.

JOHN E. BOWLES

*Baytown,
Texas.*

SIR: I have lived in Texas all my life but have been in all forty-eight States, Canada, and Mexico, and nowhere have I found such wonderful T-bone steaks and other beef as we superbly fortunate folk of this community have.

EDWARD E. SILK

*Wichita Falls,
Texas.*

SIR: I have eaten in homes, restaurants, hotels, and roadside inns from coast to coast, and I want to tell you that after reading Isabelle Post's story, I am forced to the conclusion that in her travels in the South, she probably was not permitted to eat in the "white folks'" dining rooms of the Hotel Peabody in Memphis; the San Jacinto Inn near Houston; the Empire Room of the Rice Hotel in Houston; or the Century Room of the Adolphus Hotel in Dallas.

H. C. COPENHAVER

*Wharton,
Texas.*

SIR: I once weighed 170 lbs. and had pep and energy to strike dumb a whole gang of stevedores and all the Black Watch. Got a much better job in Norfolk, Virginia—half the work and nearly triple the salary. Took up quarters in leading hotel. The first morning entering dining room thought, this is the life. But the waiter brought me some breakfast food and a poor quality of blue ink to douse it with, some coffee which would start the whole

crew of a windjammer off in a body to see the Old Man, awful scrambled eggs and bacon. Dry toast and water, O.K. When my weight had dropped to 135 lbs., I resigned and bought a steamer ticket for New York. Put in two hours pacing the deck waiting for dinner gong and beat it to the dining room. Stayed there to finish up the leavings with the waiters.

A. L. PUTNAM

*Arcata,
California.*

SIR: If the food Isabelle Post describes in her article was the only "Southern Food" she ran into, and if her experience was not sufficient to acquaint her with the fact that *pomme de terre* are not sweet potatoes, but the White or Irish variety, I think surely no one could class her as a connoisseur of Southern cooking.

MRS. C. L. ATTAWAY

*Ville Platte,
Louisiana.*

SIR: Miss Post is not brave nor is she wise in damning all Southern cooking. In her narrow, smug, circumscribed existence she has set up her opinion against all the progressive inn-keepers, restaurateurs, and food emporiums of the North who continue to alluringly play up their dishes by advertising same as "Southern fried chicken," "Southern waffles," "Southern biscuits," etc.

J. E. TOOLE

*Washington,
D. C.*

SIR: Before discarding the magazine in disgust, I learned from Isabelle Post's highly informative article that "if there were another Civil War, the Southerners could be scared out of their wits by a bombardment of green vegetables." Now why in heaven's name did she have to print that right out loud where Hitler or Mussolini or anybody else could get hold of it? I'll bet she would feel bad if they

came over and wiped us out, simply by brandishing a few nectarines or something!

HELEN PARKER

*Durham,
North Carolina.*

SIR: Imagine my pleasure, while reclining on the veranda of our palatial Southern home with a bottle of tarantula juice by my side (that indispensable aid to Southern digestion), after a delightful dinner of sowbelly and assorted grits, when my eyes happened to fall on Isabelle Post's article on Southern cooking. In the ecstasy of the moment I completely forgot to go on picking at my feet, which is the real reason Southern belles go barefoot, in case Miss Post doesn't know it. I thoroughly sympathize with her indignation at Southerners' cooking their food with grease. I wish to hasten to assure her that there are sections of the South which have reached a higher standard. At home we always throw away the food and drink the grease.

CLARK GALLAGHER

*Parks,
Arkansas.*

SIR: The following statement is made in Miss Post's article: "Broccoli is unheard of in the South." In my own home we have fresh broccoli on the average of once a week. I telephoned a local grocery company and am advised that they have fresh broccoli for sale in Little Rock all through the year.

GEORGE O. WIRTZ

*Little Rock,
Arkansas.*

SIR: Occasionally there occurs a case of stomach ulcer down here, as Miss Post says. The only two such cases to reach the front pages this year, though, were those of Harry Hopkins and son Jimmy Roosevelt. With all the South's faults, we cannot be blamed for those two men.

MARVIN H. CARTER

*Troy,
Alabama.*

SIR: I once tried eating a meal bally-hooded to me as having plenty of flavor without "all the seasoning you Southerners use." It was a New England boiled dinner. Hay is very toothsome compared to a lot of stuff boiled up with only salt and water.

ALDEN C. SONNIER

*Crowley,
Louisiana.*

SIR: Isabelle Post's article, so graphically delineating the condition in the Confederate States during and after the war of seventy-five years ago, shows that her five years in the South were during that period. She must have been mature to have made such observations at that time, so must now be near 90 years of age. To have been for five years associated exclusively with the class of people so vividly described, she herself must also have been in dire poverty. So she has our sincere sympathy.

Since the advent of the automobile, about forty years ago, the wealthy and aristocratic people of the whole United States have made annual trips to Florida. These people would not endure a single meal such as she depicts, either en route or during their stay in the South. This gives evidence that the conditions presented by her have not been universal as she claims for forty years.

G. M. BEERBOWER

*Hollywood,
Florida.*

SIR: Isabelle Post says the reason the South lost the Civil War was because the poor cooking of the South killed the Confederate volunteers as fast as they volunteered. According to the National Encyclopedia (a Northern volume), the Confederacy lost 258,000 men by death and the Union lost 360,000 men by death during the four years of the war. There must have been a tremendous lot of poor cooking in the Northern end of the conflict!

F. ION ROBERTSON

*Green Cove Springs,
Florida.*

SIR: This writer has enjoyed an enviable reputation as a cook for a number of years, having worked for Southerners and Northerners alike. Most of those for whom I have worked have been of the opinion that there was something about Southern cooking that made one enjoy eating it, and that was conspicuous by its absence in Northern culinary art. It must be remembered, however, that there is no substitute for Mother's cooking.

JOHN MURAT HOTARD

*Houma,
Louisiana.*

SIR: I concur entirely with Miss Post—that it is difficult to procure the best cuts of western meat in the South, and difficult, too, to obtain superior fruit. But the statement that "except during the short growing season, fresh ones (vegetables) are practically non-existent" is not true. I live in a small Southern city. January is not a growing month. This week I have a choice of the following fresh vegetables and fruits for my table: turnips, spinach, cucumbers, carrots, broccoli (not "unheard of"), squash (which I do not fry), snap beans, cabbage, okra, mushrooms, avocado pears, lettuce, egg plant, celery, Brussel sprouts, green peppers, bananas, strawberries, tangerines, grapes, coconut, pineapple (which is not "coated with egg and cracker meal and sentenced to grease ponds for their baptism"), grapefruit and apples.

An inland town, remote from the coast, we may have for our table crabmeat, shrimp, oysters, and a dozen or more kinds of fish. We do eat grits and enjoy them, but my estimate would be that they appear on our table about once a month.

MRS. JULIUS W. CONE

*Greensboro,
North Carolina.*

SIR: I feel it very much deserving Of mention that the South is serving In lieu of broccoli and a host Of other stuffs, nice "Roasted Post".

Currently it's steady diet —
Really, Isabelle should try it.
On second thought, they salt and spike it,
So, of course, she wouldn't like it.

W. HARRISON BREWER

*Casper,
Wyoming.*

SIR: Be kind enough to permit me, a traveling salesman, to comment on the article by Isabelle Post. Miss Post is absolutely right in her conclusion that Dixie cooking is cuisine of the skillet, but I differ with her on the importance of the three M's. It seems to me that three G's would be more descriptive. Grits, Gravy, and Grunts (Grunts — fat salt pork to you).

When a traveler crosses the Potomac River he waves a So-Long to all good food or even fairly good food, for the deeper one gets into the Southland the deeper the grease. Good beef is hard to find and prime beef is impossible. Pork and veal are served the day after the Last Mile and as for lamb — Miss Post said it — goat. I have been in many hotel dining rooms where there were three kinds of meat on the menu and all pork. So take pork or else.

Some fairly good vegetables are grown here but they are shipped to the Damyankees. I was in the asparagus belt last spring during the shipping season and it was impossible to get even one dish of that succulent shoot, as we would get it in Old Manhattan. We could get stems, culls, and seconds cooked in broken pieces and in a sauce of thin milk. As for corn on the cob — no dice. In the early spring young field corn is sent North by the truck load, but sweet corn is not only not grown, but not known. The vegetables one gets are of the coarsest and cheapest kind, snaps (string beans), cow peas, mustard greens, cabbage, always fried — and collards — and don't forget the collards. Have you ever seen collards growing in the field? Tall, heavy, gross, and full of holes, they resemble a three-year-old overcoat that the moths got tired working on. Candied yams, rice (as a

vegetable), and grits — grits three times a day. All greens are boiled with a hunk of fat pork, smoked or just plain salt, and come out of the pot permeated and seething with pure essence of swine.

To get even fair food in the South one has to go to the larger cities and find the restaurant patronized by tourists, but when you find such a place you will probably discover that it's run by a party from the North.

A DAMYANKEE TRAVELER

*Savannah,
Georgia.*

SIR: Isabelle Post is about 80 per cent right. Meat in the South is tough. The best of it tastes as though it might come from aged cows. Green vegetables are scarce in most sections of the South. Fruit likewise. Sometimes one actually gets good butter in a Dixie cafe, providing the Greek has kept it away from the fish or cheese. I must disagree with Mrs. Post on the ice cream, however. Most of it is equal to that made in the North. Speaking of cockroaches, in Memphis they are collected by colored folks in the city restaurants and sold for fish bait. One cockroach jobber I know handles nearly 500,000 roaches a year.

ANONYMOUS

*Nashville,
Tennessee.*

FAN MAIL FOR MR. LERNER

SIR: Max Lerner's "Epistle to the Right" reveals the typical technique of all apologists for Roosevelt and the New Deal. Take his linking together "the Kuhns, Girdlers, Varneys, Pelleys, Hagues, and Winrods." The first three have no more in common with the latter than communists have with the Federal Constitution. Does Mr. Lerner forget that Hague is the Vice-Chairman of the Democratic National Committee that boasts Patrick A. Nash of Illinois among its potent precursors of the better life? In the recent campaign in Illinois, did Mr. Roosevelt, the standard bearer of the Lerner

Leftists, repudiate the Nash-Kelley-Arvey Machine that elected Lucas to the United States Senate on the slogan "Vote For Humanity in Government" tacked on to Roosevelt's picture?

Like all magenta-tinted touters of Marxism, Mr. Lerner raises false issues and then proceeds to rationalize his point of view. He says that those on the Right, because of their class-fears of personal insecurity, have "turned to obsessive hatred of President Roosevelt as a symbol of militant democracy or John L. Lewis as a symbol of awakened labor." And he attempts to justify his own wishful thinking that Roosevelt is a symbol of militant democracy and that Lewis is a symbol of awakened labor, by terming those who disagree with him, "incipient fascists." The term is mine, but that's what he means.

If Mr. Lerner knew anything of the history and development of fascism, he'd know the planned economy, regimentation of industry, governmental domination of or by labor unions, experimentation with currency, and subsidizing of a large portion of the population by such noble projects as WPA, PWA, Relief, NRA and other such ventures, constitute fascism in its truest sense. The attribution of benevolence to the accomplishment of these institutions, only aggravates their inherent danger. I wish the Lerner, the Roosevelts (F. D.), the Lewises, and Hagues would concede that those who oppose them are honest and not a part of a fascist conspiracy.

PHILIP R. DAVIS

Chicago,
Illinois.

SIR: I wish to object to Max Lerner's rather arbitrary manner of attributing specific reasons or *animi* to all anti-New Dealers, to wit: "... they have turned to obsessive hatred of President Roosevelt as a symbol of militant democracy or John L. Lewis as a symbol of awakened labor. . . ." I believe that most of the "haters" dislike the two gentlemen named more for the

following reasons than for some which Mr. Lerner has dreamed up:

Roosevelt. Because he never knew the meaning of sweating for a salary or a fee or a commission, yet tosses away the citizenry's money by the hatful; because he never will admit that he might possibly be in the wrong; because he makes political capital of widespread destitution; because he publicly pouts like a spoiled child whenever he is crossed. Is there much of "militant democracy" about that?

Lewis. Because his CIO broke promises and contracts wholesale, sabotaged machinery and buildings, successfully tampered with the erstwhile sacrosanct U S Mail, grabbed the workmen's money and used it to pay addle-pated, leather-lunged professional agitators and to purchase millions of votes, assumed arrogant control of at least one Federal agency, and succeeded in obtaining wages and hours for his boys which make the average office-worker feel like a mule in the mine. Rather than awakening labor, Mr. Lewis seems to have handed around the marihuana, thereby inspiring labor to go to regrettable extremes which have begun to redound to labor's detriment.

WHITFIELD HILLYER

Evanston,
Illinois.

SIR: Max Lerner observes that the Nazi triumphs in Europe have sent that continent hurtling back to a medieval social system which he describes as a "spectacle of terror and death," "racial hysteria," and a "cult of lies and brutality." But should not communism be included in the same category? Is Russia not worthy of the same castigation? Is there more personal freedom in Russia or in Germany? The friends of communism belabor the Nazis, for they well know that the rise of the dictators in Europe was the only force which stopped Russian domination of the continent.

EARL K. SCHIEK

Chicago,
Illinois.

SIR: These weird, fast-thinking, clever writing dreamers must be in their glory these interesting days. I often wonder whether they contribute anything worthwhile. Shot-gun rationalizations that take in the whole universe sort of stagger one! These men get on a theme and seem to be completely carried away with it, unless perhaps they are intellectual liars and hypocrites, and on this I come to no satisfactory conclusion. Lerner seems sincere, but he takes in a lot of territory. It would take too long a letter to answer so many dogmatic assertions. But I'll bet THE MERCURY enjoyed a cynical smile when it accepted this piece, for it surely will send Rights farther right, and some Lefts will throw up their hands in despair—except of course the maniacs.

CLOYD W. MILLER

*Mineral City,
Ohio.*



THIS IS DEMOCRACY

SIR: Mr. Nock's question, "What is Democracy?" I think finds comprehensive answer in Plato's Republic: it is a form of government responsive to an unfettered will in the majority of the people, and characteristic of man some six hundred times removed from what Plato conceived to be the ideal, whether of man or his government. Twenty-five hundred years add nothing more to this definition, but demonstrate plainly that democracy, as Plato pointed out, is just one step, and an inevitable one at that, from oligarchy and all that it implies of helotry and enslavement. All that may be said to be democratic in our institutions is the necessary response of granted powers of government to the will of the majority, or in other words the exercise of a delegated sovereignty in accordance with the "republican principle".

J. WHITLA-STINSON

*Warrenton,
Virginia.*

SIR: Is democracy a thing, an idea, a system of government, or merely a verbal mouthful?

Now the Greeks had a word for crowd. They called it Demos—democracy being a rule by the people and a demagogue being a leader of the people. If democracy means anything at all it means direct government by the people collectively. In a village of one hundred inhabitants a democracy might be possible, although I suspect that even in such a case village affairs would be administered by a mayor, constable, and tax collector. But a democratic form of government in a nation is unthinkable. There never has been a democracy except in dictionaries, cross-word puzzles, and in the mouths of demagogues. Moreover, I shall run the risk of Jove's thunderbolt by expressing the hope that I never may see one. A real democracy, even if it were possible or feasible, would be the worst imaginable form of government, for the simple reason that the majority of the populace are wholly without training or understanding of the problems of administration of public affairs. Why politicians talk about democracies as if there were any such things, heaven only knows. Democracies, purple cows, pink elephants, snarks, boojums, and flibbertigibbets are interesting figments that float in the imagination under certain fairly well-known conditions. But I would rather see a pink elephant than a democracy. The elephant is more companionable and less likely to run amuck under the influence of a political catchword.

C. V. WILCOX

*Chevy Chase,
Maryland.*



FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SIR: "The tumult and the shouting" against Hitler and his anti-Semitism has somewhat subsided and given way for an opportunity for a little sober thought, so let us consider how in God's wide earth we

can help matters by counterposing against anti-Semitism an anti-Germanism equally as bad or worse? Are we going to overcome evil with evil, or evil with good? The very emotional outburst of pure feelings of revenge and vindictiveness makes fertile soil for anti-Semitism right here, simply because it is of this very stuff that it is made of.

Emotional outbursts of blind passion against Hitler or anti-Semitism without intelligent and ethical probing of causes and removal of the same, only help rather than hurt them. The Hitler enigma and the Jewish pogrom must be eliminated by securing better international relations based upon mutuality and friendship and by attempting to remove the basic internal dislocations and economic maladjustments of the countries themselves. It is certain that the kind of emotional castigation, vituperation, diatribe, and wholesale condemnation manifest in the recent debauch of hate will get us nowhere except deeper into the very evils we try to stop.

PAUL BRINKMAN

*Portland,
Oregon.*

SIR: The assumption is now being made in leading "advanced circles" that Great Britain is on the way out as a first class power. Many thoughtful people, however, do not subscribe to this theory. They consider it somewhat premature, as well as in bad taste, to cheer the winner before the battle has been fought out. To be sure, the struggle for power among the nations goes on, and daily becomes more intense. But in Europe at least it is still being waged in the main at the conference table. The material for another great "wrestling of the nations" is being feverishly whipped into shape in the arsenals and aircraft plants of the great powers. But that remains in the future, and if it appears for the moment to Lawrence Dennis (and others) that Hitler and Germany cannot suffer a reverse, let us remember Napoleon, who

bridled and rode the French nation to glory — and to Waterloo.

PAUL L. CROCKER

*Waverley,
Massachusetts.*

SIR: It used to be the custom to let other peoples be happy in their beliefs. The French Republic and the absolute monarchy of Russia were on the most cordial terms, and neither tried to convert the other. And now, we are back where we started. It began in 1916 when we started a war to make the world safe for democracy. Ever since Germany and Italy have turned totalitarian, our newspapers have preached a holy war against them, trying to convince the people that they should not mind all the horrors of war, that they would be amply repaid if only they could get the type of government changed in Italy and Germany.

I cannot help but wonder why we have to convert the world to democracy. Even if we feel happy with it, how can we be sure that other nations would like it? The Germans tried it, and are voting now solidly for dictatorship.

OTTO RAHN

*Ithaca,
New York.*

SIR: In all the years that I have been an ardent reader of your publication, never has an article raised my blood to the boiling point as "After the Peace of Munich," by Lawrence Dennis. If the matter were not so serious, one could get a good laugh from it. No war was averted; it was only postponed by Hitler to give himself more time in which to become better prepared and better fitted to attempt the maniacal ideas which has been his obsession for quite some time.

S. MARTIN STEIN

*Cleveland,
Ohio.*

SIR: In your December issue you certainly present the finest analysis of our foreign correspondents that I have ever had the pleasure to read. I served as a pressman in China for a year and upon my return saw some of the feature stories I had sent in. They were completely garbled and changed to suit the reading craze of the American public, with no emphasis on truth or reportorial veracity.

JAMES TUCK

*Redlands,
California.*

SIR: Does Lawrence Dennis really believe that Herr Hitler would be satisfied with a continental Europe dominated by Germany in close partnership with Italy? Surely, in his cozy rational home three thousand miles away, he must realize that the lust of Mr. Hitler is the same lust of the late Kaiser. The domination of the world under Nazi influence is the obvious goal. This is easily seen in the Lima Conference going on now. A child would understand that the fertile markets of South America would try to be scooped in by the swastika. Mr. Dennis accuses the Americans of getting hysterical over events in Europe. Wouldn't anybody with the slightest degree of decency in his soul get a bit worked up when they see what Hitler domination means? Lord help the members of any minority when the Germanic scourge proceeds to roll.

BENNETT BERMAN

New York City.

NOW WE'LL ASK ONE

SIR: Permit me to ask two questions on matters of public interest: 1. Isn't it odd for any inner-circle New Dealer, particularly Mr. Sumner Welles, to express the conviction that we dislike dictators when only last month we entertained dictator Batista and tried to make him and his government look decent and acceptable to both Americans and Cubans? 2. Why do we see so few

newsreel films showing the unpleasant side of the Spanish and Chinese wars and why have we been deluged with so many stupid Hollywood productions in which the military services are glorified? Could anyone be interested in making us war-minded once more?

B. MCQ.

*Detroit,
Michigan.*

PAEAN FOR CIDER

SIR: Having indulged in one of my periodic re-perusals of old *MERCURIES*, I have come across that epic "The Art of Cider-Drinking." It recalls to mind my earliest indulgence in that soothing beverage, "frozen cider" — at the tender age of ten. I was week-ending with a friend. While the grown-ups were at church, my friend bethought him of a keg of cider his father had been freezing through the winter. Together we repaired to the woodshed, and with an auger bored through about eight inches of solid ice before we reached the seductive fluid in the center. Then, not being lads who did things by halves, we went into the house and with the warmth of the six-foot logs permeating our small exteriors, we quaffed a goblet apiece.

An hour later we were rudely awakened by the arrival of the family from church. A whiff of our breaths and the secret was out. Needless to say, I was sent home in disgrace. Was it worth it? Yes.

ARCHER W. IVES

*Needham,
Massachusetts.*

BEARDING KARL MARX

SIR: The greatest mistake of Karl Marx was that he divided mankind into the rich and the poor. It can be divided only into the ignorant and the more ignorant. The haves and the have-nots have the same psychology — all want to be richer. There's

not a beggar in the world who would not find a poorer one and exploit him.

*Hollywood,
California.*

BORIS S. GLAGOLIN

SIR: Every now and then somebody comes out with a new gadget for decreasing our labor and increasing our comfort that is so simple and effective that we all shout as with one voice, "Why didn't I or some one else think of that before?" I feel that way about the article in the current *MERCURY* in which William Henry Chamberlin exposes the enormous fallacies of that supposedly-omnipotent prophet of world economics, Karl Marx. As far as my observation goes, no one has heretofore thought to put the Marxian dogma on the dissecting table, especially in the light of the master's prophecies.

While I don't claim to have more than average brains, I long ago concluded to my own satisfaction, after reading everything from the Left itself on which I could lay my hands, that the whole Marxian ideology is the most monumental example of false premises and conclusions that has ever been evolved in the realm of economic theory.

*North Cohocton,
New York.*

ROSCOE PEACOCK

NAVY MEDICINE

SIR: As a Hospital Corpsman in the U. S. Navy, I feel qualified to reply to the anonymously-authored article, "State Medicine, Navy Style." The fallacies of some of the author's suggestions are readily discernible. For instance, none but a doctor woefully lacking in courtesy, common sense, and ethics would agree on his plan of diagnosis and routine for treatment by a civilian physician to be instituted in a Naval Hospital by the Medical Officer. Only an MO of the same ilk would take any action on his idea of a Utopia in State Medicine. Regarding the competency of the

SOQ Medical Officer, it is the rule rather than the exception to find him a man of varied experience and sober judgment. The laboratory tests mentioned can barely be done in three days regardless of scheduled days for different work. (I'll bet you didn't know this, Anonymous.) The rest of the castigation is unworthy of notice save for a touch of Rabelaisian humor and a strong undercurrent of spleen-letting.

C. J. ANGELO

*U. S. Naval Hospital,
Philadelphia.*

SIR: In response to the article "State Medicine, Navy Style," I should like to bring out the inside view as seen by a Navy Nurse. There was a bit of truth in what was said by this author, but we are really burned up about it. Here are a few of the reasons:

Our Friday inspections. Personally, I think inspections are very fine, and they are an old Navy tradition that I hope will live forever. Perhaps if this author could visit civilian hospitals where inspections are not made, he might appreciate their value; but he apparently did not see beyond his cubicle. Particularly unjust was the item about doctors in the Navy. The author doesn't seem to realize that many of these medicos are leading men in the professional world, listed in *Who's Who*. Some have served in the Navy several years, and are quick to recognize a Gold Brick, or a neurotic, from a really sick man. (To the anonymous author: If the shoe fits, wear it.) It was intimated that deaths of the Navy personnel had no reflection on the doctor involved; but the author didn't know that if there was any doubt to the cause of a death, a thorough post-mortem investigation is made and records are kept for each. Doctors whose records do not come up to par are passed over for promotion, and if it happens a second time, they are out. The mission of the Medical Department of the Navy is to "keep as many men at as many guns as many days as pos-

sible". The nurses, who were so uncouthly referred to as "battle-axes", do not appreciate the remarks made in their behalf. They may be battle-axes to some, but to me they are a fine group of women.

A JUNIOR NAVY NURSE

Washington,
D. C.

SCRIPTURE FOR MR. POLLOCK

SIR: Many months past, Channing Pollock did an article named "You Can't Be Unlucky"—I believe that is the correct title. It appeared rather offensive, insulting to many soundly intelligent and diligent persons whom I knew to be handicapped by difficulties.

I have been waiting to come upon a fair reply. Tonight I find it—in Ecclesiastes: "I returned, and saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all."

PHILIP I. GIBBONS

Newark,
New Jersey.

BOSTON PAPERS—PLEASE COPY!

SIR: Lawrence Dennis' article, "After the Peace of Munich" is such an excellent contribution to your magazine that I send you my heartiest thanks for printing the other side of the story. Unfortunately we only read distorted news, very little truth in our Boston papers. THE MERCURY has won quite a few friends here.

ELISABETH BIEWEND

Roxbury,
Massachusetts.

A PLEA FROM CHINA

SIR: From across the seas we send you our heart-felt greetings. In our country we are fighting for those rights which democracy and freedom give, and we are confident that America, which stands for these

same ideas, is our closest friend. Moreover, we feel that America and the democracies of the world should stand united and through an awakened public opinion firmly resolve to devise ways and means by which aggression and international lawlessness shall be curbed.

Do you realize that Japan is buying 54 per cent of her munitions from the USA? Her heavy industry depends upon a grade of steel and a type of machinery that can be bought only in America. Her military trucks, airplanes, oil, and gasoline come largely from your country. It is your purchase of Japan's chief export, silk, that enables her to buy these indispensable supplies from you. Ninety-seven per cent of your silk comes from Japan; 85 per cent of all the silk that she exports is sold in the USA.

America can help to stop aggression in China. A welded public opinion in America against Japan and her imperialistic policy can be a most effective instrument and we are appealing to you to be a part of this force.

A CHINESE STUDENT

Shanghai,
China.

BOUQUETS

SIR: There was a time when we felt we could not do without THE MERCURY—to read through an issue was a noble and gay adventure of the mind. One did not have to agree to respect it. Now, it seems mostly to be a petty, hysterical, bad-tempered political organ. Your contributors (with the exception of Mr. Mencken and a few guests you seem to invite in to try to raise the standard) lean over backwards to live up to your editorial policy. One simply cannot respect such minds. In your sweeping condemnation of the deplorable effects of the New Deal, don't forget to include what it has inadvertently done to the once inspiring, intellectually honest MERCURY.

JOSEPHINE SCHUYLER

New York City.

SIR: Three kinds of letters — of late seen much too seldom in the Open Forum — are in my opinion worth the space they take up: the humorous comment, of which there is an excellent example in the January issue (the Indian squaw letter re "This Motherhood Bunk"); the letters giving statistical correction or addenda; and the authoritative, well-written letter which shows evidence of real thought and presents a different viewpoint. The last mentioned, especially the delightfully spiced variety has been conspicuous by its absence recently, though the December issue of a year ago has no less than fifteen letters as readable and interesting as MERCURY's own articles.

MARGARET H. WIESENDANGER
New York City.

SIR: I have been an avid reader of your excellent magazine for quite a number of years and shall continue to be however much I might "see red," on occasion, when some benighted scribe, to my way of thinking, runs amuck between the covers of your magazine. There is no question in my mind but that your editorial staff has its well known tongue in its cheek when it accepts for publication certain types of articles, but all the same I consider it a superb policy. These selfsame types of articles act as much needed stimuli to most of us Americans who, altogether too much, tend to become too lazy in our thinking.

WALTER H. HEAD
*Natchitoches,
Louisiana.*

HINTS-TO-THE-EDITOR DEPARTMENT

SIR: I enjoyed the Unpopularity Contest in THE MERCURY. This was for individuals. Now why not an unpopularity contest for cherished institutions? May I inaugurate it? I nominate: 1. The radio, as perpetrated on the people. 2. The educational system. 3. The Spoils System and the civil service branch of

it. 4. Hero worship of aviators, movie stars, etc. 5. Moronic publications.

That's for a starter.

R. C. O'BRIEN

*Arlington,
Virginia.*

SIR: Your presentation of "The Other Side" is a good idea. By contrast, the arguments of the Left appear even more ridiculous than usual. However, in many people's minds, the opposite of Leftist is fascist, which implies to some that THE MERCURY thereby admits its own fascist tendencies. I know as well as you that this is not true, but in order to balance things up, why not present some well known Nazi or fascist writer in "The Other 'Side.'"

ANONYMOUS

*Montoursville,
Pennsylvania.*

WHY A 1940 ELECTION?

SIR: This editorial of yours, "Why Hold an Election in 1940?" Is it, or is it not an editorial? It reads like a novel; smells like a coon-dog after having contacted a polecat; sounds like Tweedy Brothers' Hell-Against-the-Gate-Post; tastes like Russian blood; and scares like the devil. What does it mean? I read it twice; the second reading with more care than the first. Then I was disgusted and sad to the extent of tears. "Bah!" I said, "the author either got up with a bellyache, or he was kidding." I then forced myself to take the witness stand, and examined and cross-examined myself. I was an obstinate witness, and refused time and again to answer my own questions. I concluded one of two things: either the editor is crazy or I am. Why? For a President of the United States to try a *coup d'état* as suggested would be madness, because it might mean a presidential assassination. The killing would be for a cause — a big, patriotic cause — which most likely would take it out of the murder class.

I realize that we are in tight straits. But we have been in holes before, and dug out. Americans can think; they are thinking. And, believe me, our President is not the idol that you believe him to be. He is headline news because the press believes it to be good news. Let me make a guess. If Roosevelt runs for President in 1940, he will get a worse beating than he gave Hoover or Landon; and he will be looked upon as the biggest Presidential flop of all times. The advance stage of the undercurrent is here, and the crest will appear in 1940.

E. H. Yost

*New Martinsville,
West Virginia.*

SIR: Considering your editorials and articles by contributors, concerning the New Deal and Roosevelt, your article, "Why Hold an Election in 1940?" is rather startling, and from your defeatist attitude it must have been written some cloudy morning when a hangover was parking in your system.

We have had six years using the public as guinea pigs—result, nil. Twenty billion more debt, more deficits, more "pump priming," business clubbed and regimented, permanent dole, everyone demanding surplus commodities bought and given away, demoralized manhood, thrift only a memory, capital on the run. Socialism and communism thriving in and outside of the Government, hatred preached by Roosevelt with devastating results, principal advisors semi-socialists with nitwit theories, Congress abdicated, employers threatened by "business assassins" Jackson and Ickes. Interest on savings accounts halved, Government responsible for increased cost of life insurance on account of low earnings. Farm program a failure, cost to taxpayers a billion dollars annually, responsible for export of cotton being lowest in twenty years. . . . This is not a pretty picture; still your idea is to have a continuation of this period of crack-potism, only more so, which will mean the end of our nation—God forbid!

Well, you know when seriously disturbed, the mother skunk whispers to her six little kittens, "let us spray."

WARWICK E. MILLER

*Providence,
Rhode Island.*

SIR: I agree very much with your presentation of the idea to keep Roosevelt in for ten years, or so. Do you realize that it is about time for us to have a dictator in order to banish from America the many insane master minds of cults, isms, religions, etc.? Whether Roosevelt is the one or not, remains to be seen.

CORA ARNOLD

*Quincy,
Illinois.*

THE FACTS OF LIFE

SIR: I had the good fortune to pick up a copy of the November MERCURY. After leafing through it, I settled down and read "Is Sex Lawful?" I got a tremendous kick out of it. I happen to be a medical student, and among the numerous fields of study we spend some afternoons in the psychiatry dispensary, which is a truly startling adventure into the private lives of patients. If these so-called censors, the demagogues of chastity, could hear the stories of patients who are presented every day with all manner of bizarre pains, ills, bad dreams, and delusions based on sexual conflicts and fear complexes, they might find an afternoon well spent on the other side of the fence.

The press, aside from a few intelligent parents and the family doctor, is the only means of taking the sin out of sex by sheer frankness. If young people could be presented the truth about sex, its function and dangers, in an impersonal manner free of the suggestive blushes of pretended modesty, they might be enlightened. How's about giving the censors a little more razzing and unveil a few of the facts of life to children in one form or another—either

in periodicals or in schoolbooks? And leave the birds and bees to music and honey.

GLENN C. WOLF

Chicago,
Illinois.



IN BRIEF

A thumbnail sketch of the world today is offered by Mrs. Gertrude Goodspeed, Waban, Mass.: "There is, and always has been, a great deal of smug hypocrisy among the Have nations of the world and it appears now as if the Have-nots and the so-called Heathen nations have at last found it out. Hence the great fear!" . . . Mr. Dennis's hint that the British sun is setting sent Morris A. Jaffe of Astoria, Oregon, searching through the files of history for solace. He discovered that in the Seventh Century, when the Islam was on a rampage, it looked as though Christendom were doomed — yet it survived to face and outface new threats. Don't be too certain, he warns, that Adolf, Soso Stalin, and Benito must come out on top. . . . J. D. B., from the Capital, contributes a quotation from the December 15, 1938 issue of the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of Paris: "The only way to make one part of the population support another part is to favor the enrichment of a category of citizens who could pay enormous taxes. The system would not be one of high morality but it has a certain logic on its side. It is absurd for the sake of theory, or to satisfy the democratic feeling of envy, to make the rich pay and to ruin them." Strange ideas these heathen French do have! . . . Mrs. Virginia Aigeltinger assures us, apropos "This Motherhood Bunk," that "labor is no sine-cure or will be," although her own experience has been fortunate. "Thanks to an article in THE MERCURY nearly six years ago," she informs us, "extolling the virtues of sodium amytal for childbirth, my first child was born painlessly and the second one, this year, also". . . . Mrs. Frances Newsome of Lodi, California, adds

that "because some individuals have the good fortune not to be too highly inconvenienced by pregnancy and labor they should feel more compassion for others not so fortunate". . . . Alan MacDonald's article on the Great Iroquois Fire asserted that "the so-called asbestos curtain . . . was little more than paper." A fragment of that curtain is our reward for this remark. It is sent on by George Warren Stetson of Boston, and we admit that it doesn't look or behave like paper. Mr. Stetson was connected with the company that made the curtain and testified on the matter before the coroners' jury. . . . From far-off London town Mrs. Carolyn Shipman Whipple signals some orchids. Our Editorials under the head "Report on America" especially move her to enthusiasm. "It is well-nigh incredible that Americans should submit to being regimented," Mrs. Whipple writes. "Is there no one to wake them from the hypnotic sleep into which this man (Roosevelt) has put them?" . . . "Government banks managed by men paid by the government" is the overly-optimistic solution for the ills of American economy prescribed by L. E. Hoy of Silver Creek, Nebraska. All economy, Mr. Hoy believes, rests on original robbery, followed by its legalization and thereafter oppression by the "legalized" of the "unlegalized" robbers. How he will keep the robbers out of government banks is not clear — there's always a hitch. . . . E. R. Furber of New Richmond, Wisconsin, agrees with William Henry Chamberlin that the Communist Party "has done an incredible job of *reductio ad absurdum*" with Marxist theories. That, however, is no reflection on Marx but on his Soviet disciples, Mr. Furber argues; "Stalin's mistakes cannot be blamed on Karl Marx". . . . The editor of the Concord, Massachusetts *Herald*, Charles H. Mason, describes himself as "just a city mug . . . now a country weekly editor walking in the paths of Thoreau and Emerson." He writes to agree with Alan Devoe that "the art of awaken-

ing is a high accomplishment." This view has been his own and now he can point to Mr. Devoe's concurrence and say "Alan Devoe must be a crackpot too". . . . Although not himself in the Navy, J. J. Davis of Washington, D. C., protests against "State Medicine Navy Style." He fears that the article may alarm mothers who have sons in the service. . . . The fate of the Jews continues to absorb the sympathies of many of our correspondents. J. Reyes Martin of Brooklyn, New York, who describes himself as a Freethinker (the breed can be very dogmatic and given to blind faith at times), believes that "the only way to bring about a real and lasting peace would be by building a common ground; let us meet in the same temple, in the great temple of our better nature where ethics and humanity meet". . . . Why look to Alaska for ex-

emplars of official regimentation, Christine Olson of Rowland, Nevada, wants to know in commenting on last month's article, "Cabbages and Commissars." She proceed' to cite her own experiences right in Nevada. Having listed the red tape questions which the government propounded before extending an emergency loan, Mrs. Olson wonders why, with so many more important problems to be solved, the administration must "seek to discover how many beans and how much toilet paper a couple of it, borrowing clients consume". . . . Oh, for more pages to fill with Open Forum contributions which we had hoped to publish! Alas for the toothsome insults, the embarrassing compliments, the neat solutions of insoluble problems, the cockeyed suggestions and justified complaints which can not see the light of day!

THE CONTRIBUTORS

WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN (*Hands Off Japan!*) is the noted foreign correspondent, at present in Japan. **EDITH CHERRINGTON** (*The Meek*) lives in Pasadena, California. **WHITFIELD COOK** (*Here Comes the Bridegroom*) is connected with the theatre in New York City. **VICTOR C. CORMIER** (*The High Cost of Lawing*) is a New York attorney. **SARA HENDERSON HAY** (*The Two Gifts*) has often appeared in *THE MERCURY*. **DELLA T. LUTES** (*Vulgar Virtues*) is the author of the recently-published *Millbrook* (Little, Brown). **EUGENE LYONS** (*Dictators*

Into Gods) next month becomes editor of *THE AMERICAN MERCURY*. **LOIS MATTOX MILLER** (*The Paint and Powder Racket*), born in Georgia, lives and writes in New York. **LOLA PERGAMENT** (*Love Me as Light*), also a Georgian, is a regular contributor of verse to *THE MERCURY*. **CHANNING POLLOCK** (*I Am a Reactionary*) is the well-known dramatist, author, and lecturer. **OLAND D. RUSSELL** (*King James I of Michigan*) is on the New York *World-Telegram*. **JAMES STEVENS** (*The San Francisco Disturbance*) is the author of *Paul Bunyan*.



The Bethlehem Steel Quiz

TRY IT ON THE FAMILY

Language is local. It is colored by custom, climate and occupation. This month's Bethlehem Steel Quiz takes a swing around the map. A question which is easy for Houston may furrow the brows of Boston, and vice versa.

Score 20 for each question answered correctly. A score of 60 is a passing grade. An economics teacher or a business man may feel pleased at a mark of 80. Wives should not ask the help of husbands on more than two questions, if at all. School children should do better than their elders.

Correct answers on page x

1. Texans and Oklahomans know more about many subjects than wisecracks in the East. In Tulsa, for example, most of the citizens are familiar with the term "seamless casing." Seamless casing is:

- (a) *The skin of frankfurters sold at roadside stands along highways in the Southwest.*
- (b) *A welded steel tank for gasoline storage.*
- (c) *A nightshirt woven in one piece, without stitching.*
- (d) *A kind of steel pipe used in the drilling of oil wells.*
- (e) *A hermetically sealed Indian tomb.*

2. Through Maryland, Virginia, the Carolinas, in upstate New York, in fact wherever by-products are near at hand, farmers use a chemical fertilizer which is a by-product of the coke oven, namely:

- (a) *sodium chloride*
- (b) *cyanide of potassium*
- (c) *ammonium sulphate*
- (d) *bicarbonate of soda*
- (e) *bichloride of mercury*

3. Steel fence posts are used extensively in the Northwest, the Corn Belt, and wherever strong, durable installation is required. There is one kind of livestock for which strong fencing is especially needed. This kind has been publicized recently by a proper name:

- (a) *Petroushka*
- (b) *Ferdinand*
- (c) *Milquetoast*
- (d) *Kosciusko*
- (e) *Chrysostom*
- (f) *Abigail*
- (g) *Karenina*
- (h) *Dryden*
- (i) *Faraday*

4. Florida's vast fruit packing industry is one of the world's largest consumers of

- (a) *steel sheet piling*
- (b) *bolts and nuts*
- (c) *sheet steel*
- (d) *drop forgings*
- (e) *wire nails*
- (f) *pipe*

5. What steel company, now exhibiting at the Golden Gate International Exposition, has steel plants at Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Seattle; and shipyards at San Francisco Harbor and San Pedro Harbor (Port of Los Angeles)?

Answers to Bethlehem Steel Quiz

(See page ix)

1. (d) A kind of steel pipe used in the drilling of oil wells, Bethlehem-International Supply Company, with headquarters at Tulsa, will distribute thousands of tons of seamless casing in the oil country this year.
2. (c) Ammonium sulphate. This product usually is sold through wholesalers and dealers, because of the large tonnages involved at the point of production.
3. (b) Ferdinand the Bull.
4. (e) Wire nails for boxing.
5. Bethlehem Steel Company.

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*** indicate an outstanding performance
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ORCHESTRAL

***††† *Domestic Symphony, Richard Strauss*: (Victor Album 520, \$10.00). With this first recording anywhere the Victor Company does a definite service toward filling the gaps in the phonographic repertoire of the great German decadent. Despite the notoriety proceeding from its familiar program, the music is seldom played; and indeed must be judged lesser Strauss. But it is necessary and illuminating to have the smaller aspects of large talents; and the Philadelphia Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy has not obscured the instrumental brilliance enveloping the Symphony's meager ideas. The transfer of a difficult work to disks has been accomplished with the success now regularly expected of the American orchestral recordings of this company.

*† *Overtures to Titus and La Finta Giardiniera, Mozart*: (Victor 12526, \$1.50). The only recordings extant of these Overtures, and for that an intelligent listing. However, Bruno Walter conducts with little imagination or vivacity, and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, attenuated for Mozart, is reproduced here with a piercing violin tone and unsatisfactory definition.

***†† *Through the Looking-Glass, Deen Taylor*: (Columbia Album 350, \$8.00). This is the soundest recording of a symphony orchestra ever made by Columbia in the United States. The advance in efficiency since the Wallenstein records is amazing; and while there are faults in this set, particularly in balance, the records are resonant and clean. The music has not

been recorded before; and the composer here supervises the performance by Howard Barlow and the Columbia Symphony Orchestra, a capable organization. Few American works have held a place in the symphonic repertory as long as this: it is an agreeable and amusingly characterized piece of light program music, judiciously influenced by the *Oiseau de Feu*.

***†† *Overture, La Scala di Seta, Rossini:* (Victor 15191, \$2.00). An exhilarating performance by the BBC Orchestra directed by Arturo Toscanini, the most prominent conductor of Rossini. Nevertheless, the record of another Rossinian, Sir Thomas Beecham, (Columbia 9077M) seems on the whole preferable. Less brilliant, it is suaver and more ingratiating.

††† *Tristan und Isolde, Symphonic Synthesis, Wagner-Stokowski:* (Victor Album 508, \$9.00). Various parts of an untouchable music-drama touched up and played out of sequence by Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Repellent.

CONCERTO

****††† *Concerto for Pianoforte in A Minor, Schumann:* (Victor Album 473, \$6.50). Not only the first really satisfactory recording of this favorite work, but a superb performance. Myra Hess' affinity for this Concerto is well known; and it is a pleasure to note that her moving and sensitive work is so admirably supported by the conductor, Walter Goehr, that the resulting homogeneous romanticism seems the product of a single intelligence. The recording of both piano and orchestra is excellent—the best to date in concerti—but the string tone suggests that the nameless orchestra is not of full strength.

INSTRUMENTAL

****†† *Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel, Brahms:* (Columbia Album 345, \$5.00). Egon Petri shows what delightful results may be had by a minimum of rubato even where much is permitted, when the pianist is a musician both conscientious and imaginative. The best performance on records of Brahms's most appealing piano work.

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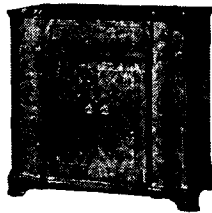
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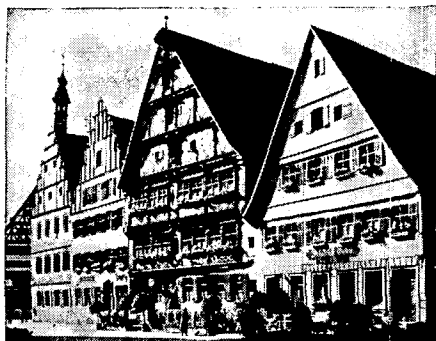
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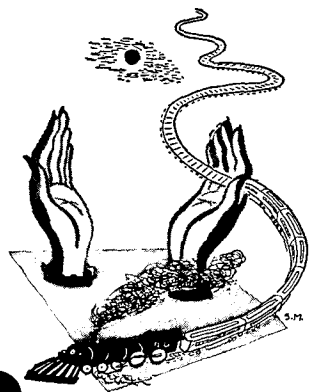
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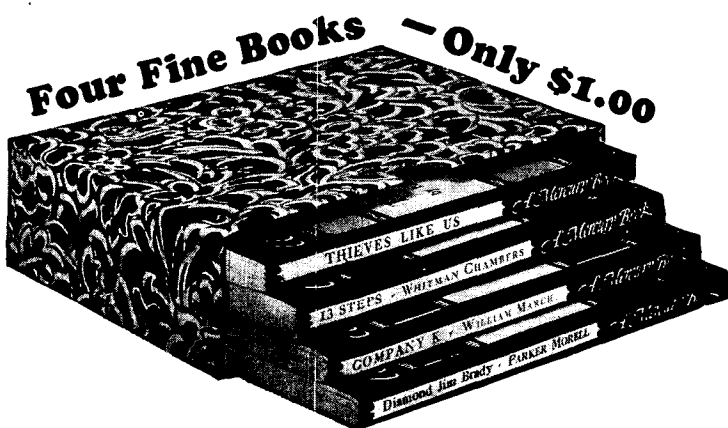


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